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THE RANCH OF THE
BLUE SEA

BY

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I.

WHY am I writing this? I don't know. Certainly not as a confession; for, certainly, I would n't trouble to confess to this rotten world. Even as I am writing, I have not the least intention that any human being ever shall see it. I know only that this thing is within me, boring, boring, that it walks with me in the day and sits on my bed. Liquor used to drive it away; but last night I discovered all at once that liquor was failing me, that it inclined me to be maudlin, almost like that poor rag Major Gwynneth, that sat opposite me blubbing about what he'd been once—before he paid some gambling debts with his government's money. I must try to rid myself of it, and there is none to whom I would tell it. So I am going to write it. Then I'll tear it up, I trust, and be myself again.

There has been something like a veil over my eyes, blinding not so much my physical sense as my mental one. When I try to think back, it seems a glance into gray age; yet it is only eleven months since a chance meeting with Dr. Mordaunt brought about that which has come.

I ran across him in a drinking place in Jeremie—a low den. In spite of his rage, I knew him on sight. It was n't so long ago since he

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had had his day in court and it was the smart thing to make up court-parties to hear and see. Ragged he was, and squalid, but we drank together without bothering about introductions. He was reduced enough to be glad to drink with anybody; and I was just sufficiently furious.

A lot of tourists, gawking around, had run into me. Among them were a good half-dozen men who had been glad enough, once, to wait patiently till I felt like seeing them. There were some women among them, too, who had been glad enough to share in my amusements. They fluttered a bit in the first surprise of the meeting in the squalid tropic street. Then they straightened out and passed me, eyes front, each supercilious face blank as if I were not standing full in their way.

Well, I certainly did n't get out of their path. No man lives who can say that John Fordyce ever skulked around a corner to avoid him. But I don't know why I did n't take one of those hounds by the throat, especially the gray-faced fox in the lead, with whom it used to be "Mr. Fordyce this" and "Mr. Fordyce that."

After three or four drinks Mordaunt began to tell a cock-and-bull yarn about himself, and I hate liars. So partly for that, and partly for the sport of seeing him struck in a heap, I said, "You've got the wrong sow by the ear. I know you. I saw you—the day you were sentenced to the chair!"

He changed as if the chair he was sitting in had been The Chair. He was too sunburned to go white; but his lips did, and his eyes froze.

I studied him for a bit while his mouth went as if he were talking, but without a sound. "Here!" says I then, pouring him a good horn, vile cane rum, but strong. "Here! I won't give you away, Mordaunt. But don't lie to me! That does n't mean that you're to tell me the truth, either. Don't tell me anything—not even how you broke jail, though that might be worth knowing."

"I did n't do it!" says the white mouth at last. "My God! Why should I? I loved her!"

"Oh, drop it," I told him. "I'm not a bit interested. What's your name now?"

He passed his thin hand over his forehead with a weak, wavering motion. "I hardly know," he muttered. "I hardly have use for a name. I hardly have use for anything human, except—except—" and he reached for the bottle. I put my hand around it and held it. "You must be using some name," I said.

His hand wandered over his forehead again. "Rogers—Rogers," says he. "Call me Rogers—anything."

"Well, see here," I told him. "Rogers—or Dr. Fell—whatever you call yourself—Haiti is no place for you. Don't you know that any one of these black freemen, down to President Simon Sam, would sell you to the American police for about two depreciated silver sols if they

suspected that you might be Dr. Mordaunt, the illustrious wife-murderer?"

At that he got so blazing red that it showed through his tan. "John Fordyce," he snarls—and that's the first I knew that he knew me—"John Fordyce, railroad wrecker, bank wrecker—you—you gigantic thief!" Then I had him down.

He was weak—starved, probably—and I pounded his face slowly. I put it to myself that this face, staring up at me from the dirty ground, was the face of all that flattering, wheedling, lying world that had snapped at me as soon as luck turned. Railroad wrecker, bank wrecker—no man should throw that lie into my face unpunished.

The Haitian owner of the dive gave me time. He threw himself on me only when he had half a dozen others to help him. If a man wants to know what manhandling is, let him be a white man and let him give half a dozen Haitians of the lowest class a chance at him. Mordaunt did n't look a bit worse than I did when we broke away.

This meant jail for us just about as quick as the barefoot police could be roused; and a Haitian jail means something to a white man, even without the previous treatment of cocoa-wood stick from the police. A fine lot of good the American consul would be! And that was a shameful thing to think of, that an American citizen, acquitted by an American court after trial, should have abundant reason to know that his own government would n't raise a finger to help him! No. There would be no American squadron to inquire with cannon after John Fordyce's health.

There was only one thing to do—leg it for the harbor and get on a ship. I made Mordaunt leg it with me—not that I cared a rap for the weak-lipped assassin, but I had a fancy for cheating the hunting mob that calls itself the United States of America.

I got my baggage on the run out of the canteen that pretended to itself that it was a hotel, and a boy in a dugout paddled us to a dirty steamer that flew Norwegian colors. I'd seen her captain, an Englishman, fuddling himself in Jeremie, and I figured that an Englishman who sailed under another country's flag *and* was a drunkard would be easier to deal with than more prosperous ship-bullies.

He was a rough beast, but he took us in after I showed him money and agreed to pay him about twice over what it would have cost for first cabin on a liner. Then he was so anxious not to lose us that he got under weigh ahead of time, and when half a dozen Haitian boats flying official flags and full of official gold-laced, bare-footed ragmen came out into the harbor, we were rolling away bound for Santiago-de-Cuba.

It did n't make much difference to me where we went. As for Mordaunt, or Rogers, Cuba was sure to be pretty unhealthful for him, but every other place in the round world had that same defect in his case.

Any way, it seemed to me, as I looked at him, huddled into nothingness on an old deck chair, that a dignified death in a dignified electrical apparatus was n't half so unpleasant as a death in a tropical gutter.

He was sulky at first, but after a couple of hours he needed liquor, and liquor cost money on the Norwegian steamship *Oskar Nordhoug*. I was n't minded to waste any on him, but he was depressing without it, and, Heaven knows, the *Oskar Nordhoug* did n't need to be made more depressing!

II.

CAPTAIN CASTLE joined us next morning, when the ship was pounding along the devilish coast of southeastern Cuba, with its tumbled mountains that pitch off into a sea of blinding blue without a bottom, and its enormous, endless stretch inland of mountains on mountains, nothing but mountains, and nothing on them except torn clouds—a big, big land, lonely as if it had been blasted.

Captain Castle pointed inshore. "D'ye see that cliff that looks like a scarred pyramid? Look under it where the sea breaks hardest—there! You could see that surf spout, and we're three knots offshore. There's a way through this tumble here—for the few that know it. And if a man could get through alive, he'd find an entrance between two hills, just wide enough for a vessel to squeeze through, leading into a fine land-locked cove—a lagoon. The story goes that in the clear water of the little entrance you can still see the remains of a boom that used to defend it. It was put there by an old Spanish buccaneer. He went in over there and built himself a castle, and lived and died there with his wife—an Englishwoman of great family. He'd captured her on some ship, and hanged if she did n't fall in love with him! He was a great pal of old Blackbeard's, they say."

"The West Indies are full of such yarns," I told Captain Castle. "Yarns three hundred years old, and I'm no antiquarian, myself."

He did n't take the hint. Instead of moving on about his ship's business, he continued:

"The old swine had a sinful lot of coin, or what was as good as it, in the way of crucifixes and raw gold. His descendants are there yet, and it's said along the coast that they're ungodly rich—sugar, cattle, what not. There they lived, and there the present Don lives to-day, stuffed with money and no way to spend it, for the place is a hundred miles good from anybody else, with no roads by land, and only that crooked passage out through the reefs by sea. If a stranger ever tried to drop in on him by water, he'd drop in in small scraps, if the sharks and barracudas left even that much. If there was a way in by sea, I might be tempted to steam in some day and interview the old Don, to find out if it's true that he's still got the old chap's original treasure

locked away. But the only people that know the course are his own men. All the produce of the *Rancho del Mar Azul*—that's the name of the thing: 'Ranch of the Blue Sea,' a rum name, what?—is shipped around to Santiago by water, and there's a jolly lot of it. I've loaded a fairish bit myself—big, fat cattle and big, fat bags of sugar."

"Have a cigar, Captain," says I. I'd changed my mind suddenly about moving him on. "You say this Don lives in that forsaken spot yonder, and that he's really rich?"

"Don Sebastian de Valdez," said Captain Castle. "Rum name, rum as the ranch, eh, what? Comes to Santiago about once in a blue moon, and then is as sociable as a blasted king would be. No doubt about his money, I take it. His agents in Santiago don't know much about him, themselves, but they know how much coin they collect for him. And it must all be piling up—all coming in, none going out."

When I had left court, acquitted by a jury, I was pretty well stripped. I'd been tossing my property to the public and government, as a pursued man might chuck things to wolves to check them. It didn't bother me much at the time. I knew I could get it back, and more too. But then I learned that what the mob calls "fair trial" was fair trial to them in my case only if it convicted me; and that it was the intention to drag me through court after court on every lying accusation that sneaking slander could invent. So here was I, that had had the best in the land at my table, aye, even the very Governor, living filthily on a filthy ship. And in a few more months at most, unless luck turned, I'd not have enough cash for even that much.

I had n't the slightest intention of joining the nasty herd of Europeans and Americans that lurk in the byways and back alleys of earth, competing hungrily with native scum for enough pennies to keep them alive. I played the game big or not at all; and since, just now, the places where big games were played were not open to John Fordyce, the British sea-fool's story revolved in my head.

This Don Sebastian, locked away between his desolate mountains and his reef-guarded sea—what would he be likely to know about the scandalous stuff that had been flung to the air in print and speech about me in the north? A pompous ass, probably; and surely, surely, a little cracked. By Heaven! who but a cracked man would plant himself in that desperately lonely place unless bitter need drove him!

If that rich man were indeed a half-crazed or wholly-crazed fool! I am a quick man. Dr. Mordaunt had been a great alienist once, hardly a year ago. This wreck here, huddled like old rags on the chair, was a total wreck, sure enough, morally: but mentally? There were plenty of cases of men of great intelligence, and especially professional men, who served their arts or professions like priests and otherwise were utterly rotten.

The cracked Don Sebastian and the wrecked mental expert—I saw a possible combination. It was vague enough, cloudy: but something seemed made to my hand here, as soon as I should see how to use it. I liked the idea, too, of making a tool for myself, such a new, extraordinary tool as I might fashion out of this broken thing for which the world had no further use except to capture and kill it.

It was lucky for him that I might need him. Not a word of Spanish could he speak, and the chances are that he'd have been taken before he had been in Santiago twenty-four hours. It was lucky, too, for the illustrious doctor that I had knocked about in Cuba in my younger days and remembered not only my Spanish but Spanish habits of thought and act. So, though Santiago-de-Cuba was a strange place, it was n't long after landing before I had him well stowed away for the time. And then it was n't long before I had invented enough errands to put me into communication with some of Don Sebastian's agents, and I found out as much as a man might expect to find out in a week's loafing and smoking and friendly conversation about nothings.

It was enough to make it quite sure that the British beast of a drunken sailor had told the truth about the old fellow's wealth and about his seclusion. It was quite enough for a man of ready determination. In three days more I had saddle horses and pack horses, and knew as much about the way to the Ranch of the Blue Sea as anybody could tell me. Only one of the Don's agents ever had been there, and he had gone by sea in a vessel belonging to the ranch. "Never, nevermore," said he. "Señor, it was to challenge the death!"

III.

ONE of the sweet things that the papers said about me, I remember, when the mud-slinging began, was that I'd been a rich man all my life, a rich man's son, a "pampered dandy" they said in their writer's jargon, who naturally could have no idea of the privations of the poor. I wonder how many of those same sturdy, persevering poor would have stuck through one single day of all the days that followed after we left the last sandy ghost of made road and entered the red and black mountains. We got lost. We wandered through smiling days that baked us, and lay in gorges through splendid nights that poured dew like icy rain. How many miles and how many times we went astray; how many times we came to steep walls that said, "Stop"; how many times we came out on high shelves beyond which was no road but air—even I don't remember. Mordaunt, flopping to and fro in his saddle, babbled toward the end that we were riding through hell; and he seemed to be glad of it. But always and always I managed to win to some trail that led finally to some eminence whence could be caught a glimpse of the Caribbean,

deep, deep below and far off, and then I knew that we were forcing our way to our destination.

One day, and none too soon, we came out on a shelf of pink and green rock, high up, and looked, as we had looked day after day, over a land of dead peaks; but this time, far ahead, standing so boldly out that I knew nothing was beyond it but Heaven and the sea, I saw the scarred pyramid.

Next day we looked down on the country we had come to find, a country flat and green, winding away and in and out like a broad river of land between the evil hills that sprouted only stiff, sharp-bladed growth, as if the Devil had seeded it to swords.

We could see the bright richness of sugar-cane, scattered here and there, and everywhere else the deeper green of the guinea-grass, where multitudes of moving spots told of feeding cattle.

Below, many hundred feet under us, was the lagoon, with breathless water all peacock blue, and seaward were the two hill-gates of Captain Castle's story, standing face to face, as if they had been split and sprung apart just enough to permit a glimpse of the high, dark-blue line of the open sea beyond them.

A little fleet lay on that still, hidden breast of water; and beyond, on rising land, surrounded by groves of cocoanut and royal palm, stood the houses. With the glass I made them out to be trim and massive as if built yesterday, but all bearing the fifteenth-century imprint of the Moor in their great portals, sloping red roofs of fluted tile, and long, tile-roofed open galleries.

We went back to a little valley, and there we rested for a day, by a little stream where our horses could fill up till they looked a little less like vulture-food, and we ourselves could soak off the ingrained dust of a hundred-odd miles of Cuban trail. Then I unpacked the fine attire I had bought in Santiago, and we rode to the Ranch of the Blue Sea like gentlemen.

I knew Cuba well enough to know that there would be no doubt of freely accorded hospitality, with only perfunctory inquiry dictated by courtesy as to errand. Even making generous allowance for Don Sebastian's probable lunacy, it was pretty certain that we could reckon on some days of entertainment without prying questions, and in the north I had succeeded in winning men in less time than that, when I wanted to.

I won Don Sebastian. The moment I saw him, I knew I should. Though he was clothed only in brown cotton, he moved and looked as if he had stepped out of a book of Cervantes's time. At first glance, I guessed that he was the unworldly kind of innocent soul that considers itself shrewd, and before the evening was ended I knew that I was right. Don Sebastian was a big child, and I needed only to discover what was his pet goody.

I tried him next day with most of the grown-up toys: art, religion, science, politics, the romances and the vanities. None tempted him. His meditative old eyes became a little deeper, a little troubled, when I tried him on religion, and I found out that he was devout; but it was not *the* toy.

Then I tried the best toy—money. Sure enough, as of course I had expected from the first, money was it. He was keen on it, although he pretended otherwise—so keen that, though in most other things his clock had stood still for a quarter of a century, he had kept himself up to the latest science in his plantation work. He knew cattle from hoof to horn, and he knew sugar chemistry. There was no trust in the good saints on the Ranch of the Blue Sea to pull the cattle through drouths and diseases, despite the Don's deep faith in the good saints in all other directions; and though he was extremely punctilious about offering thanks to Heaven for a good crop of cane, he analyzed the cane with modern laboratory methods to get out its fullest percentage of sugar.

Yet he continued to grind with the old mill, dating back to slavery days, though he knew very well that an investment in a big modern mill would be money drawing ten times the interest that he could get out of banks. But he waved away a suggestion of mine to that effect with a grave smile. And then he let a queer remark slip. It gave me something to think about and wonder over. "Señor," he said, "my affairs demand that this plantation shall pay assured sums each year. I cannot afford investments."

The more I thought about and wondered over it, the more it puzzled me. It gave a new turn to something that I had heard in Santiago: that his agents were permitted to place his money only where it could be withdrawn in gold on demand. In the case of another kind of man, I might have been able to explain it readily enough as a phase of the avarice, or miser's mania, that makes the victim crave the tangible gold. But if Don Sebastian was a miser, he was one of a new and uncommon sort. It struck me forcibly that his keenness for money was of a queer kind, new even to me, and I've seen the gold-hungry world, rich and poor, come squealing to feed. He was keen for it, undeniably; yet it was with a perplexing air of weariness, almost disdain. Again, misers always protest that they are poor. Don Sebastian did not. To be sure, he always talked like a poor man, whenever I brought the talk around to money; but he touched on it like a gentleman.

The thing blocked me. I had found out very positively in Santiago that he had a lot of money—enough to be called a lot even in my world.

What purpose could he have in hoarding it, and wanting it to be ready in gold?

Why did he want money, any way?

It was quite evident to me that I must find out the answer to these

questions if I expected to induce the old chap to furnish me with the sinews for my new wars.

Whatever his reason was, my first move was plain enough. On the first day I had let him understand that I was riding through the land looking for possible investments for American capital. As he owned some square miles of the pine-clad hills around his valley, I specified iron now as my especial weakness. If I found iron, I told the old fellow, I would form companies that would buy his barren hills for cash, since he preferred ready cash to good investments.

Don Sebastian knew about sugar, but not about mineralogy, and I did n't force on him the disclosure that I had only a vague idea of what iron in the ground looked like. And there was not the slightest reason why I should tell him that just at present the public would n't buy anything offered to it by John Fordyce, not even hills stuffed with the finest manganese.

So I rode out into the depressing bad lands every morning and returned to spend the drowsy afternoons and the long starlit nights with my host.

He was not a babbler; but he touched so simply and unhesitatingly on any part of his past, if something in conversation happened to bring it up, that soon I was certain that he had nothing grave behind him, and no great ambition ahead—no old sin that demanded payment in money, and no desire for any pleasure to come that would demand it. An American school in youth, a little travelling, and then the past quarter-century on the plantation—that was all.

Once I thought I had it, when he mentioned a daughter, the only child of his short married life, who, he said, was just finishing a tour of the States. But everything he volunteered later about his plans when she should return, showed that he had no greater ambitions for her than for himself. To have her with him to share the simple plantation life, with occasional seasons in Santiago and Havana, these were all his schemes. He could not be hoarding gold for that.

IV.

ALMOST a month passed, and Don Sebastian baffled me still, more so than any man I ever have chosen to study. I exercised on him to the full that quality in me which men used to call my charm. More and more I learned his constant watchfulness for every possible dollar of income from the ranch and plantation, and more and more surely I perceived that behind it was no common craving. Don Sebastian had a secret. Even in his most cheerful hours, it stood behind him; and whenever there came periods when thought and conversation flagged, it stepped forth, and he brooded on it.

At this time it was that I was struck by a change in Mordaunt. It came and went, but I noticed that it was always on him strongly when he regarded Don Sebastian de Valdez.

When the change came on him thus, it was a strange thing to see, for it was seeing a man vanish before one's bodily eyes and another coming out of air to take his place. The man that vanished was the fugitive, Joseph Rogers; and the man who entered into the place was the scientist, Dr. Mordaunt.

I suppose that I had treated him pretty badly until now. He filled me with such contempt—not for his crime, but for the way he took the consequences, for the way he had let the world beat him down instead of seeking, as I did, for a chance to smash back at it. I despised him, too, for the way he let me beat him down; for I trod on him. God knows it was not because I lacked magnanimity! But it had come to this—that though I returned the world's hate with hate and waited only for weapons before I went back for my sure revenge, yet just now there was only one creature on all the earth more miserable than I, and that was this poor trembler hiding for his life!

But this new man was different. This that appeared more and more often in the next few days, and remained longer and longer in the place of Joseph Rogers, was a spirit of power, something that my own spirit recognized and knew. And apart from this, and apart from the fascinating wonder of the change, I saw that this Dr. Mordaunt's scrutinizing gaze was searching Don Sebastian, as I was doing, for a secret. My weapon was forming itself before my eyes!

When I introduced myself and my companion on our arrival at the Ranch of the Blue Sea, I named him to Don Sebastian as Dr. Rogers. I was not minded to take the trouble of inventing a lie about a profession for him, considering that I was doing quite enough by lying about his name. While he remained the broken Rogers, he had little to say, but spent most of his time listening, or dreaming, or in a torpor. But now he began to take part in the conversation; and presently it penetrated even Don Sebastian's somewhat unlearned old head that he was listening to a man who knew uncommon things.

How they came to talk about mental disease, whether Don Sebastian began it or whether Dr. Mordaunt did it in his search for the old man's secret, I don't know. However it was, one day when I returned from my ride, they were engaged in it. Just as I sat down, Don Sebastian, evidently pursuing a subject that they had discussed, said:

"Then, Señor Doctor, you do not believe that generation after generation may inherit some bad, some evil trait?"

There was that in his voice which roused me to close attention. Dr. Mordaunt, too, was attentive. He paused for reflection, and his eyes rested musingly on the old Don.

"No," said he, at last, speaking slowly, as if he were impressing instructions on a patient. "No, except, of course, in those simple medical cases where poisoned blood is transmitted. There, of course, the mental disease that follows is purely due to physical causes. But though an ancestor, sound in body, cannot transmit an insanity that may occur in him through trouble or any similar psychological cause, he can do nearly the same thing by transmitting his tradition. Give a family some family ghost to haunt them, some family skeleton, and it is quite possible that descendants of morbid minds may brood over them till they, in turn, become mentally diseased—much as a man, bitten by a harmless dog, can brood over hydrophobia till his nerves imitate all the symptoms. He does n't want to get hydrophobia, he has n't got it, and he could n't have it under the circumstances, but he dies with symptoms that would mislead any except specialists in that particular disease."

Don Sebastian leaned toward Dr. Mordaunt and spoke rapidly. "Then if a descendant—or descendant after descendant—knowing of a great, terrible wrong done by an ancestor, commit that same wrong when their minds become sick, are they responsible before God?"

Dr. Mordaunt, I could see, did not know what to reply. He spread out both hands to signify his helplessness.

"Now you ask something that can be answered only by God," he replied at last. "What is human responsibility? What is its measure? We commit an act, hardly venal, so slight, so slight——"

He sank in his chair. Dr. Mordaunt vanished, and huddled with hands pressed to his face sat Joseph Rogers.

Don Sebastian interested me even more. He had arisen at the Doctor's words, and his eyes were looking far away, seeing nothing of the room.

"Yes," he said, his tone vibrant with sorrow. "Yes. You, Señor Doctor, are a learned man, and I am not; but, learned and unlearned, we come to the same answer. God knows alone; and all that we human beings can do is to right the wrong as best we can, with our blind eyes and clumsy hands."

I was close to the secret at last!

Next day I induced Mordaunt to ride with me. "What do you think of the old Don?" I asked him after we had galloped a bit. "Has n't he got a little——?" and I tapped my forehead.

Mordaunt assented. "He's got something very unhealthy in his thoughts, something he must rid himself of."

"Like the case you mentioned yesterday?" says I. "You put it to him because you thought it was his. I saw that."

Mordaunt nodded, but said nothing.

"See here, Mordaunt," I said sharply, going direct to the point,

as I always do when the time has come. "See here! You must find out what it is. I'll give you a guiding hint. It's something connected with money, with lots of money. He's hoarding gold, that I know. Already he must have close to a million—a million that he can draw at a moment's notice, in gold—in gold, man! Do you know what that means? Give me a million in actual gold, and I'll move the world with that lever!"

"You want me to help you get hold of it?" he asked. I did n't like his tone.

"Don't talk like an old woman!" I answered. "Don't fall into the cant of the fool mob! Do you think I want to take the cursed money away from him? A million! I want ten times that—to take. Help me get that money of his for my lever, and I'll give him back his lever twice over, never fear."

Mordaunt did n't speak, but I liked his look as little as I had liked his tone.

"A fluid million!" said I. "D'ye know what it means? It's worth ten times what it would be in property or securities that have to be hawked 'round among infernal money-lenders for their infernal scrutiny and questions till they condescend to lend something on them, at their own terms. Give me that in gold, and they'll dance as I bid them. You know what I've done. Do you doubt that I can do it again—with the actual, solid gold, gold, man?"

"I have n't the least doubt," said Mordaunt, "that John Fordyce can do anything with it."

"Get me that, help me to get at it, find out what is Don Sebastian's morbid fancy about it, and I'll get back where I was; and this time I'll ride the mob, ride 'em whip and spur! I'll buy the hounds off from you, Mordaunt! I'll buy 'em, right and left, so that you can go back and hold up your head again!"

"If you had offered me something like that in Jeremie——" said he, with a very curious quietness, as if he were speaking of somebody else. "But something since we've been here has pulled me together. Now the only thing that I want in the world is to prove my innocence, and that you can't do, with all the money there is."

It was on me to laugh in his face. But I did n't. I had something more important to me than ripping down his hypocrisy. He had to feel the bit before he grew too lusty, I could see that.

"Mordaunt," says I, "the long and the short of it is that you'll do what I want or I'll turn you over to the police!" With that I put spur to my horse and galloped away, to let him chew over it.

There was no way out of it for him. So I merely said to him after a couple of days, "You're doing what I want?" and he answered curtly, "Yes."

V.

I HAD exhausted the hills by this time, but I was forced to no subterfuges to excuse a ~~few~~ further stay. I have said before that men used to speak of my charm. A conceited ass, no doubt, likes to imagine such a quality for himself, just to pander to his idiotic vanity. But a man whose designs demand that he use all other men as the instruments that they are, must know his own qualities, good and bad, as he would know every part of an engine under his control. So I knew very well that I had this quality which is called by so womanish a name, but which really is the power of subordinating other men and making them glad to follow.

I have said, too, that I used it to the full on Don Sebastian, and his was a simple nature, easy to play on. So when I made preparations for departure, I was not surprised that he urged me, almost pleadingly, to stay. But even I was surprised at the extent of the conquest; for, toward the end of his old-fashioned grandiose speeches of courtesy, he said to me, "See, Señor Fordyce, I am a lonely man, knowing few; nor would I readily open my heart to strangers. But you, you have come to me—how shall I say? You have brought into my still house a fresh richness of spirit. You have showed me that in that large world of yours, where I know there is much of greed, there are also nobility and honor. If you would but stay a little longer, you would make an old man a gift as of gold; for truly, John Fordyce, I wish that I might have one like you for a son."

He was a man not especially wise or notable in any way, and my own father had been one who welded men to his use as a metallurgist welds iron. Yet when I answered Don Sebastian that I too would be glad could I own him as a father, I avow that I spoke truly what was in my heart.

Now there came a strange time in my life, for it was a time when I was at peace. Aye, as I stop here to think over all that great, full life that I have not written down on this paper, but that still is written, written and done, I become conscious almost with a shock that never, in all its fulness, did I have peace. It came to me then, on the lonely coast of Cuba, amid the desolate hills, in Don Sebastian's house.

There was such peace in the old man, despite the secret thought that ever was within him. And there was peace in heaven and on earth. It was the dry season. All the land was rich in flower and leaf from the rains, but all stood still, growing no more, like some beautiful thing struck into breathless sleep. Days unchanging followed one another, so stately, so long, that it was as if time itself were beating with a slower, less hurrying wing; and the nights were unchanging marches of armed stars in vast procession.

We came close together then, Don Sebastian and I, riding over the dew-sprayed valley while the huge sun still lay behind the mountains, lounging half asleep and half awake through the hot day in the flowering patio, while the eternal trade wind whipped the high fronds of the palms back and forth across the throbbing blue sky. For a time, a long, long time, as it seems to me now, the spell of the parading tropic days stole me away from thought of all that had been and all that was for me to do. We talked together as boys might talk of dreams. Yes, I, John Fordyce, who knew that the world is for those of us whose hands are swiftest of grasp and surest of grip, talked to the old man of the imaginings of dreamers who write philosophies.

Mordaunt troubled us little in that time. He either sat near us, smoking in silence, or he potted in the lagoon. I gathered that he had taken up some of his old work again, in biology.

It had made me sit up, that lagoon, on my arrival at the Ranch of the Blue Sea, for it was as Captain Castle had said. Through the clear, sky-colored water of the narrow entrance there was plain to be seen on the bright sands three fathoms deep the remnant of some great barrier, probably a boom. Its original substance had long been devoured by teredos and salt water, but not till coral animals and a hundred races of tropical mollusks had made a solid cast of it with their deposited shells. On the limestone rock-gates there hung still such links of ancient hand-wrought chain as had been beyond the reach of the destroying sea-salt.

There was a ruin on a little mound commanding the lagoon and its entrance, with enough of thick walls and loopholes left to hint that it had been a fortress—a deduction confirmed by Don Sebastian. But he, so frank otherwise, had been communicative about fortress and barrier only to the extent demanded by politeness.

The lagoon was becoming a busy place. Sugar-grinding had begun, and, in addition, Don Sebastian, like a prudent man, was shipping out as many cattle as possible before the dry season should starve the land. The fleet of heavy sailing craft plied in and out continually, carrying the produce to the port of Santiago. Several times I climbed the heights at the entrance to watch the crooked, perilous course pursued by these vessels as they worked out through the twisting, breaker-bitten channel. Indeed, even with the aid of a glass, it was impossible to see any quiet water. It was all one confused plunging of white-streaked blue.

It was easy to understand how calmly Don Sebastian's piratical ancestor in his light-draught ship could defy any vessel of war to follow him into that. Don Sebastian's men worked their way in and out, I found, by landmarks on the hills, and there was no coming or going, for even the most skilful of them, at night or in thick weather.

VI.

ONE day, after opening his mail which had come in from Santiago on one of the lighters, Don Sebastian, his face bright with smiles, leaped up and laid both hands on my shoulders.

"She will arrive, my friend, in a week! She is coming on the next ship!" he cried.

It was as if ten years had fallen from him. Ten years? Twenty, perhaps. He ran to the great doorway and clapped his hands for the servants. Orders to prepare her rooms, orders for decorating the house, orders to bring horses in from the range for her, came in a torrent of eager, joyful excitement.

There was a schooner in the lagoon, a graceful thing, built in the time of springing bows and tall masts. Under Don Sebastian's hurrying orders, they stretched awnings and bedizened her with rugs and cushions, bent clean canvas on her and made her as gay as a beribboned girl.

He sailed next morning in the dawn, one of the West Indies dawns that rise, somehow, like living things, grandly tall, with wide-spread, gracious arms.

In the last few weeks it had been abundantly clear to me, though the simple old man imagined that he had kept his thought secret, that Don Sebastian hoped that his daughter and I would fall in love.

I remember that as I watched the schooner sail away I was amused. God forgive me! But there is no God.

If there were a God, he would not curse us so. If there were a God, He would whisper to me the hope that somewhere I shall see her again.

Hortensia Valdez! You stand before me ever as you stood on the white ship's deck, with the sunset making a vast amber pool and rosy islands in the solemn sky.

You stand before me ever, and this is my great torment and my only joy. Surely, surely, some day you will be real again, and I shall touch your dear hand and see your eyes, now always so darkly blue with sorrow, brighten again into violet light!

You are sorrowful, ever, as you stand there, Hortensia. But see! I—I am in hell! And I kneel down to you and pray to you to come to me and bless me with that sorrow!

If there were a word to tell my love for you, I would utter it, Hortensia Valdez, and then you would come; for it would be such a word as would burst the tomb itself!

Her father led her by the hand in stately ceremonial, and I walked toward her as she moved toward me. I saw the shimmering whiteness of her dress against the peacock lagoon and the columnar palms. I saw the world colored wildly with the sunset's fire. All these I saw and yet saw not, for with eyes and heart and soul I saw the woman I desired!

She was tall as I, and our eyes met fairly. In that moment I knew that in mine there shone something that came from no conscious purpose within me, but that leaped hotly out from me like a challenge. Her glance fell. But she looked up again, half frightened, half defiant.

Then I bowed and murmured some smooth phrase, for her father was making courtly introduction. What I said and what she replied, I did not know. I knew only that I heard her voice.

Cuba is far away to-night; yet just now there passed through this room the perfume of jasmine. It was so strong, so mournful sweet! Shall I not see her moving toward me through the tropic dusk, tender and ardent as that dusk itself?

It was in jasmine-perfume that I wooed her.

The Southern Cross was low and dim in the southern sky when I began. It had climbed high and bright before I won. Then I stood higher on earth than all the stars in heaven.

She was half afraid of me always, even when at last she gave me all her brave, dear heart. Yet each day I stripped away something of the John Fordyce that had been and put in its stead something new of humility. For I desired to win her by no art, no cleverness of wit or tongue, but just for love—I, who had laughed so often and so long at the thing called love.

But how can I degrade the wonderful thing that conquered us two, by comparing it with the childish thing called love in love-sick tales—tales wherein men beg for a woman's love and are glad to get it as a dole, as if they were children, content with getting what they want, even though they know it is given only to stop their lamentation?

So mightily did I desire her, that to win her I would have broken the ten commandments and a hundred more; but I would not mar the splendid prize by pleading for it—and she, my strong, beautiful woman, was too great-hearted and true to deny, and make believe, and engage in the other little lies of sentimental, weak-minded girls.

No play-house talk, no story-book scenes—but, day by day and night by night, her glorious eyes told me what I know mine told her; and for all that the world could give I would not have spoiled the rapture of the waiting, the triumph of seeing her love grow greater than her fear.

On a night so white with moon that shadows of palm and tree lay blue on the staring land, I walked with her down a path rich on either side with flower-flames of the tall hibiscus. I broke one and held it toward her.

"Bend your head," said I. "I have a fancy for putting it into your black hair myself."

She bent her head, sideways, without a word; and as I looked down into her eyes, I knew that the time of waiting was over. In a moment I held her in my arms.

"At last!" I said. In spite of myself I had to fight for breath, and my voice was hoarse. I could not, would not, speak again. I only held her to me.

She struggled to free herself, and I could feel sobs shaking her, but I did not loose my hold.

"I am afraid of you, I am afraid of you!" she gasped.

I let her go then and looked at her. "I know," said I. "I have seen it. Now tell me: why do you fear me—what is it that you fear in me, me that would go through a thousand priests' hells to get you?"

I held out my arms, and she came and laid her head on my shoulder. Then I held her very gently and asked again. But I had to ask many times before she answered.

"I do not know," she said at last. "But there is something in you, something, something, that seems dark and terrible. Oh!" she cried, "I do not want to fear you, but I do!"

"But you love me!" said I.

"I love you!" She spoke so softly that I had to listen close. "I love you so dearly! I love you, though now the fear is greatly on me, and my heart is heavy with it."

"If I knew what it is in me that frightens you," I answered, trying to laugh lightly, "I'd change it. But you are a little vague."

She did not smile. But when I drew her toward me again and kissed her, she took me suddenly around the neck and pressed her face close to mine. "For joy or sorrow, for bliss or misery, John!" said she.

We had not gone on far when she put her hand to her hair with a little cry. "The flower!" she exclaimed, and turned in haste.

I spied it lying in the path. It had been trodden on and was crushed and dusty. I kicked it aside, broke another, and held it out, but she shook her head. Instead, she stopped and picked up the wrecked blossom.

"Why, there are a dozen blossoms finer than that one!" I said. "Come! I'll fill your hair with them!"

Her eyes looked at me, full of whole, surrendering love; yet there was the dread in them, and it was very strong. I kissed those eyes, rather than have them search me, though for the life of me I could not tell what troubled her.

"You do not understand!" she said; but she let me fill her hair with hibiscus till she looked like a spirit of night crowned with fire, and she clung to me, and all the world and the night were one great white wonder.

All the world was a wonder, and stood changed for me. My hate of it, my longing for revenge on it, all vanished in pettiness now. Now I would go back and fight it and conquer it for her. Hortensia Valdez should be looked at, stared at, envied; and all the power that I had

held and lost should be accounted as nothing against the place to which I should raise her by my side.

I was not dreaming in a drunken joy. Long ago, long before I saw Hortensia Valdez, I had planned coldly and step by step what I should do with the gold that Don Sebastian could call in. The only difference now was that instead of squeezing the world of its beloved heart's blood for mere revenge, I would lay it under tribute, and it would be many times what would have contented me only for vengeance. Whatever secret purpose Don Sebastian might want money for, he should have it twenty times over. There should be no woman on all the earth who could have anything that my wife might crave.

VII.

WHEN we returned to the house that night, Mordaunt was sitting under the portal, alone. The moment I caught his glance, I knew that he guessed what had occurred. It irritated me that the fellow should have any part in it, however remote; and when I sat down, after bidding her good-night, I scowled at him over my cigar.

He affected not to notice it. "I know what Don Sebastian's secret is, Fordyce," said he abruptly.

"You can go to the devil, you and your secret," I replied promptly. "I've changed my mind. You can go to the devil."

Something went over his dark, thin face like a flash, but he forced back whatever was on his lips to say, swallowed hard, and then repeated, quite steadily, "Still, Fordyce, I advise you to hear it."

I tossed my cigar away and went into the house.

Next day I asked Don Sebastian for his daughter, and the old chap put his arms around me and cried. He went around all day like a boy, laughing and singing, and I was glad that Hortensia kept herself secluded, for he was capable of any extravagance. It was not till evening that he sobered down. Then he became grave.

"I have made no secret from you," he said to me then, "that I am a poor man. I know that you want her for herself, and not for money. Had I not realized your fine nature, John Fordyce, I never would have permitted you two to meet. So I fear that to utter the word 'money' to you may be offensive. Yet I must tell you that my daughter will not come to you as an entire beggar."

I smiled, thinking nothing except that this was Don Sebastian's modest way of acquainting me with his wealth.

"While I have nothing to give her," he continued, holding out his empty hands, "she has her mother's fortune of fifty thousand dollars; and it gives me joy that she shall bring that to you in her hands when you take her from me."

I sat still and stared at him. Had Don Sebastian not been so entirely carried away by his happiness, he surely would have seen in my face that I knew he was lying. And that was a queer thing, too. There he sat, lying crassly, yet his face was innocent and trustful.

It was on my lips to throw my knowledge into his face, but I mastered myself, even forced myself to smile again, and to say quite naturally and heartily:

"How often, Don Sebastian, have we agreed that the world is insane to hold wealth high?"

And if he had wanted to mock me, he could not have invented a more mocking answer: for he said:

"I tell you most truly, John, whom I so gladly call my son, that if you had been quite penniless you should have had her. But your riches, honestly come by, cleanly, without blood or sin—surely, surely, there is no curse on them. Yet almost I could wish that I never had learned from you how wealthy you are."

It was no particularly pleasant job for me to go to Mordaunt and take back what I had said the night before. However, there was nothing for it, so I went quickly. "I've changed my mind again, Mordaunt," says I. "Tell me about Don Sebastian's lunacy."

"It is n't lunacy yet. It's only a delusion, a fixed idea that he has brooded over till it will do something to him if he does n't rid himself of it. Now listen, John Fordyce. Don't interrupt me." He was so resolute, he was so concentrated, there was so much strength and sureness in him, that I did as he bade me.

"When I was on trial for the murder of my wife," he said—and though a swift pain leaped over his face, now there came no sign of weakening to his features or his steady form—"if one single face of all the strange faces that gaped at me had looked at me with pity and hope that I might prove myself innocent, I might have borne it better. But they all stared with the hope of seeing me confronted with damning proof, of seeing me found guilty. That was what broke my nerve. That was what made me flee instead of asking a new trial. Do you know what gave me back my nerve?"

I knew from his earnest look at me, as if he were studying me for some ailment, that all this had some bearing on my own affairs; and I answered him with silence.

"You might have done it, Fordyce," he took up his speech again, "if you had shown me the least human sympathy in Jeremie; but you did n't. Yet you were kind, in your way. There is a perplexing double nature in you, John Fordyce. But again—do you know what gave me back to myself?"

I shook my head. At any other time I must have leaped up in anger, but not now. I felt that something was hanging over me.

"It was when I saw Don Sebastian," said he, "when I saw that he was a man with a sick mind. It awoke me to my business in life again. You are a keen man and a quick man; but you were not keen when you believed that I would search the old man's secret because you threatened me. Why, I was searching him for it from the moment I saw him! And now"—and I saw with wonder that in the steady glance that he fixed on me there was more than ever of the physician's solicitous regard—"I can tell you what it is. I wish that I could have known it to tell you before matters went so far with you as they did. I wanted you to hear it last night, before you went to see him. But now that you have seen him—and I know what he must have told you—I want to put it to you to stop before you ask me for it. I have been studying more than Don Sebastian. Fordyce, you too are sick in mind. I speak as a doctor to you. You can cure yourself, because now, by God's mercy, there has grown a great and good desire in that mind of yours, that is so strong and intelligent and that has been so strangely blind to the difference between good and evil. John Fordyce, I advise you solemnly: take the old man's daughter and let his secret be."

I wondered at myself for my patience during his harangue, and I decided I had been patient long enough. "What little backstairs intrigue are you trying to play?" I demanded. "There'll be the devil of a time here before an amateur like you, my dear doctor of sick minds, gets between John Fordyce and something he wants. If there's any lunatic asylum needing guests, the guest is far more likely to be a patient named Rogers-Mordaunt than Fordyce!"

I wanted to shake Mordaunt out of his infernal calmness, but I failed. He put the tips of his fingers together with a gesture that infuriated me, because it was precisely the attitude of a doctor studying a case.

"I'll tell you his secret," said he, "but not because you demand it. I'll tell you because I don't want you to shake his mind by going to him for it. Fordyce, mark! The reason that impelled him to gather his gold was dictated by a morbid fancy. His purpose with it is the purpose of a sick brain, diseased by solitude and brooding. But I warn you solemnly: suffering though he does from a fixed idea, a delusion, he has taken the one way to lay a ghost. If he is permitted to carry out his idea, he may recover to perfect health of mind and life again; but if he fails, if he is checked, if something happens to shake him——" He tossed his hands with a significant gesture.

"Come!" said he. He led the way into the old library, a place that I had n't troubled much. "You can read old Spanish. Read these. Then the rest of the story will be very brief."

He laid four little volumes in front of me. All were old, but the upper one was so very old that the paper looked and felt as if it

had been scorched and the skin cover had turned almost black. They were not print, but manuscript. The ink of the first one was so dimmed and rusted, the writing was so clumsy, and the Spanish was so archaic, that I could decipher only parts here and there. But I made out that it was the log-book of a vessel named *Donna Christina* and owned and sailed by a Manuel de Valdez. I had n't turned far before I discovered that the *Donna Christina* was no honest ship. This Manuel de Valdez evidently was the pirate of Captain Castle's story, and a rascal inordinately vain of his deeds, for he had set down with the utmost circumstantiality every detail of his business meetings with other ships.

There were a great many. Captain Valdez must have done a very good business, and the names of his involuntary benefactors showed that he did not much care whether the ship he boarded belonged to Spain or England, France or Holland. Anything that got past his colleagues of Port Royal and St. Thomas and was unlucky enough to find him waiting in the Windward Passage was his mutton.

They were flowery entries, written evidently with great pleasure. And always, at the end of each story of an engagement with a ship, there followed an entry recording the amount of plunder. It was as precise, as methodical in details and amounts, as if, instead of being made by the red fist of a murderer, it had been written by the prim hand of a prim, careful old book-keeper.

Just as I flipped the last page, my eye caught a name. It followed the entry concerning an English ship. And this time, instead of the account of loot that had followed all the rest, there was only a name, written in great, flourishing characters. The name was "Lady Kate Aspinwall."

The next volume was dated twenty years later. It too was a log-book, the log of the ship *El Tigre*—and a very good name, too. The *Tiger* had done quite as well in the Windward Passage as had the *Donna Christina*. It looked as if the writer of this log had imitated the first one, for the entries were in exactly the same fashion. When I turned back to the first page, I saw that the name of the *Tiger's* captain was Manuel Aspinwall de Valdez, evidently the son of the founder of the business; and the addition of the name Aspinwall seemed to point to the truth of the story that the original pirate had, indeed, captured an Englishwoman and married her.

I was n't at all surprised when I found that the third book was like the others, though with fewer entries. It was the log of the felucca *El Sol*; and again the commander's name was Manuel de Valdez. The date suggested that this Valdez was the son of the thrifty skipper of *El Tigre*. The Valdez family had a sweet history.

The fourth and last book reproduced the same story with only differences in detail. It was the record of the schooner *Mariposa*, com-

manded by a Manuel de Valdez of a fourth generation. The entries now, however, showed less time at sea than in the hidden lagoon. Evidently this last author, who, according to the dates, was very likely to have been Don Sebastian's great-grandfather, had found the times changed and had to run out to take ships as chance offered.

VIII.

IN glancing over this last book, I noticed that opposite every entry of loot there was pencilled a memorandum in modern money—apparently an attempt to compute the value of the plunder in terms of to-day. I ran through the other log-books again and found that the same thing had been done there.

"Well!" said I, shutting the books with a slam and turning to Mordaunt. "This is pretty ancient stuff. What's the joke?"

"Those logs," said Mordaunt, "as you've seen, stop with the present Don's great-grandfather. After his time, the war-ships spoiled the trade. So there are no more historical family records like these. But Don Sebastian's grandfather pursued the family profession under cover. Don Sebastian was only a child when the old fellow died, and he remembers him only as a savage old chap, and he remembers only that the place here was full of rough, desperate men of all nations. It was Don Sebastian's father that told him the truth, on his death-bed, and made him swear solemnly that he would strive to lift the curse from the souls of the Valdez family.

"The father, of course, had known from early youth where the family wealth came from—not that there was much of it to hand down, for the Valdez gang did not sit down quietly in the lagoon here with it. They fared forth to Caribbean ports and spent it as wildly and savagely as they had won it. Still, this great tract of land, the ranch, the sugar, and the buildings that served them as cloaks to conceal their real profession, were all bought with sea-plunder.

"Don Sebastian's father had not been a bit averse to enjoying his share of it. The grandfather was as proud of the queer record of the family as any of the rest had been, even though he was living in the daily shadow of the gallows; and he transmitted that insane pride to his son. Thus, Don Sebastian's father travelled about the world and threw his money around and, altogether, except for profession, was as good a pirate as any Valdez. But finally, after he had been a very gay gentleman for many years, he settled down in the lagoon, and there—what was it? Solitude, approaching age, anything may have done it—he grew devout, and began to brood over the rip-roaring family career. I have n't the slightest doubt that during all of Don Sebastian's youth, the father was suffering from melancholia of some acute type.

"Don Sebastian's whole story of his childhood in this forsaken place makes this quite certain," said Mordaunt. "He grew up under the shadow of that melancholia, in the constant presence of a father who had attained the delusion finally that the whole Valdez family, past, present, and future, was cursed and that the curse never would be lifted till all the gold taken by them had been gathered together again and restored. And when he lay dying, and gave these old logs to his son, and told him the story of their race, he swore that the curse was on them all; and he passed away crying that he saw the red doors of hell!"

"Oh!" said I. I began to see.

"You can understand the rest, Fordyce, even without knowing what I do of psychology," continued Mordaunt. "If you'll look at those shelves there, you'll see a perfect mass of books, old and new, about the buccaneers of the Spanish Main. For a quarter of a century he has been filling his mind full of their horrors. For a quarter of a century he has been dwelling on his father's injunction, till the family curse became a terribly real thing. He might have gone insane years since, quite mad, if he had not begun long ago to do something that so occupied his mind, filled it so fully with hopeful zeal, that it saved him till now."

He laid his hand on my knee and looked earnestly into my eyes as he continued slowly:

"He has computed, as nearly as a man can, from these old books, the sum of the plunder taken by his race. He estimates that it comes to about a million dollars at the present value of gold. For a quarter of a century he has improved this big property, he has saved like a miser, he has toiled like a peon, he has lived in utter loneliness, all for one purpose. And now, when this present crop of sugar is ground, he calculates that at last he will have brought together all the gold that was stolen and wasted by his family long ago."

"What's he mean to do with it?" I interrupted; but I had a pretty fair idea.

"I'll tell you in a moment," said Mordaunt. "Be patient for only a moment more. You can understand how I, with my training and my experience, succeeded in leading Don Sebastian to relieve his mind to me. I want you to believe something that I shall tell you now. Don Sebastian has brooded much about his daughter. Gradually he came to the great fear that even though he has kept the family history secret from her, even though he has kept every thought of money from her and has brought her up in the belief that she is a poor man's daughter, she might meet some man who had the same wicked greed for gold that his race had. You played your cards well, Fordyce. You have made him believe with all his heart and soul that you are a different kind."

"D'ye mean to hint that I'm a fortune hunter?" I shouted, jumping up with clenched fists.

Mordaunt only shook his head. "No," he replied. "I'll give you credit for not being anything like that. But it is n't the point. When you came into this affair, he saw a new and better life beginning for his race. A great deal depends on you now, Fordyce. What will you do?"

"What does he mean to do with the gold?" I demanded doggedly.

"There came the crucial thing in his mental condition," said Mordaunt. "Of course it was a morbid fancy to have it all in gold; but that was n't serious. The serious thing was that now, when he had attained his object, he was becoming acutely apprehensive that anything he might do with it, however he might return it, whether to governments or such private individuals as might be found to be descendants of robbed people, the curse of it would continue on and on. I found it a delicate and difficult matter to handle, but, thank God! I have cured him of it, and I have brought him around to a sane, healthy decision."

"And that is?" I asked.

"To give it to charity, of course," said Mordaunt.

I sank back into my chair and laughed. It was such a comically tame ending. I laughed, and then I said to him, very amiably: "Well, Mordaunt, you've had your clever little doctor's game, and no doubt you're immensely proud of it—you and your toy of psychology! Now I'll come into the game. Now I'll tell you what you have to do. You'll go to Don Sebastian, my excellent mental expert, and you'll change his mind again. You'll change his mind from charity to John Fordyce. And you'd better pray to your God and all his angels that you'll succeed; because if you don't——"

"If I don't?" asked Mordaunt coolly.

"If you don't," said I, "a person named Rogers or Mordaunt will be turned over to the New York police, if I have to carry him there in my arms. Why, curse you!" I cried, "do you think I'll let a thing like you stick blundering fingers into my affairs?"

"You are dull-witted for once, John Fordyce," said he, not a bit excited. "I told you that I had my nerve again. My intention is to give myself up."

At the realization that my power over him had gone just when I needed it, I seemed to go blind for an instant. How I got at him, how I got him down, I don't remember; but when I had him under me, I became quiet and cool again. I held his throat just tight enough so he would choke without dying.

"You poor fool!" said I, pressing his wind-pipe a bit with each word and letting up again to give him air. "You poor fool! Will you do what I tell you? I swear to you, Mordaunt, that you'll never get up alive until you promise."

I eased my grip to let him speak. He did n't struggle. He lay quite still, looking up at me.

"Don't you see," he said at last, not at all as if he were facing death, "can't you see, man, that if Don Sebastian finds that you, you of all people, want his gold, you whom he loves, he'll feel more than ever sure that there is a curse on it, and a hopeless curse? I swear to you, Fordyce, you would drive him insane in earnest!"

"Curse your insanities and curse Don Sebastian!" I was so furious that I yelled at him, though our faces were close together. "Swear that you'll lead his fancy around to where I want it! I'll have—that—gold," said I, squeezing his throat between words—"or——"

Then I saw Mordaunt's eyes gaze fixedly at something behind my back. Tightening my grip, for fear of a trick, I looked around and saw Hortensia and her father!

We were in a dark end of the room, and they were standing in the lighted corridor. For a moment they could not see; but I knew, from her half-opened, startled lips, and from his suddenly drawn, whitening face, that they had heard.

Swiftly though I got up and dragged Mordaunt up with me, it was not swift enough. They saw, and they knew.

"For God's sake, Fordyce! This is your last chance! Save the old man!" muttered Mordaunt to me. "I was unfortunate enough to offend Mr. Fordyce," said he aloud to Don Sebastian, "and he was carried away by his anger."

"You lying scoundrel!" said I. "Hortensia"—and I took her hand—"this fool has been meddling in your father's business and has led him to plan a very foolish and wrong thing. Don Sebastian"—I turned on him sharply and hard—"you must not do it! You must let me have a voice in this."

"Do you mean, John, that you think gold is better than justice?" asked Don Sebastian, laying a trembling hand on my arm. He looked very old, and I hated to see his eyes.

"There's no question of that," said I. "You gained it honorably, and you have no business, no right, to throw it away on the advice of a quack, like that thing there! Why," cried I, carried away for just one moment by my rage, "he's nothing but a fugitive from justice! He's a criminal under sentence of death!"

The instant I said it, I knew I had made a great mistake. "Have you deceived me, then, from the very first, John?" asked the old man, and tears ran slowly down his cheeks. "Have you, whom I loved so——" He straightened up and wiped his eyes. "John Fordyce," he said, in a terrible voice, "have you wooed my child with a lie in your heart?"

Hortensia withdrew her hand swiftly from mine and stepped back, her eyes fixed on my face. But I was mad with the resolve to bring the old man to his senses.

"The question is an insult, Don Sebastian," I replied. "I decline to answer it! And I repeat that you must not dispose of your fortune as you have planned!"

Hortensia stepped swiftly to her father's side. He put his arm around her. For a moment they looked at me. Then they were gone.

"You Satan!" said Mordaunt. He did not seem to fear me a bit, though his hand was at his bruised throat. "You have done wicked work, Fordyce. Did you ever read 'Faust'? You have damned your Marguerite and yourself!"

I turned from him without a word. I ran through the corridor and to the wing inhabited by Hortensia, but the old fat duenna swore that she was not there, and though I shook her till she screamed with pain and terror, she repeated it till I had to believe it. I ran from room to room, till I reached Don Sebastian's apartments. I thought I heard voices and a soft sobbing, and I knocked at the door violently, but everything was still when I listened again. I called, and at last beat at the great massive door; but there was no reply.

I did not desist till I found that the huge old bolts that had been shot on the inside defied my last ounce of strength.

I was sure she was in there, with her father; yet, when I had waited and called and thrown myself again and again at the door, and still there was silence, I ran to the moonlit patio and searched for her there.

After a while I began to pull myself together. I began to think coolly again. Every sensible argument was for satisfying me that a straight, sane talk with Don Sebastian would straighten everything out. It struck me that a night's consideration would only prepare him all the better for it. So, finally, I began to feel well content to let him wait till morning and then I would settle things intelligently with him. The more I thought over it, the more I felt certain that Mordaunt had caused all the trouble through his miserable professional monomania for finding mental disease in every queer little fancy that a man might have.

But it was different with Hortensia. A night must not pass before I saw her and told her all that was in my heart to tell her. And at that I went rushing through the great house again, again I called and knocked at her doors, again I shouted before Don Sebastian's rooms that he must let me in.

And always, always, there was silence for sole reply.

IX.

At last I could bear it no longer. I saddled a horse and rode till the brute could do no more. He fell finally, some miles from the ranch; and I left him there and ran back.

All at once there had come a great fright over me. It made my

spine cold. I ran till my lungs and heart refused their work. I walked, reeling, pitching, with weak knees, till I could snatch coughing breath again, and ran again till I fell. But at last, just as the dawn spread greatly over the sky and made day, I came through a palm grove on a little height beyond the house. As I stepped from the shelter of the tall trunks I saw a boat sailing down the lagoon before the last of the land breeze. I watched it mechanically, while I hurried to the silent house. Suddenly I stopped. And then I raced to the lagoon, shouting hoarsely; for in the boat were Hortensia and her father.

My shouts roused two or three of the plantation men who slept in huts near shore. Half awake, they looked at me stupidly and lost eternities of time before I could make them understand. When, at last, they had a boat ready to follow, the little craft had passed between the hill-gates. By the time our heavier and slower craft opened up the sea, it was in the crooked channel, with surf on either side. Suddenly Don Sebastian stood up and steered her straight for a place where the combers raced and made over-fall and whirl.

We drove close upon them. I could see my girl's black hair, I could see her dear face turned to me—and then there was nothing but a lonely spouting of waters.

The wicked sea that had taken her refused me. Though I fought them off, the men dragged me aboard again and again, till a rushing crested roller beat me into stupor.

It was Mordaunt's face that I saw looking down on me when I awoke.

"She is gone, Mordaunt!" I said. Then a great wheel of fire began to spin, flaming and crackling, from the earth to the sky.

Afterward I sat at the hill-gates and watched. I watched day and night. I watched for her to come back.

Then, once upon a time—I remember that it was dawn again, a great white dawn immeasurably wide and still—I knew that she could not come back. The knowledge came to me terribly, when I was lying face down on the coral rock and beating it with bloody hands.

At last, at last, Mordaunt took me away, and we sailed out through the hill-gates; but I made Mordaunt tie up my eyes—or did they tie me hand and foot and eyes to hold me in the vessel while she fought her way out?

We came to New York. I gave Mordaunt up to the police, as I had sworn. Yet I do not know how this can be, for he is coming toward me. He is looking into my eyes now, and he tells me to write very slowly.

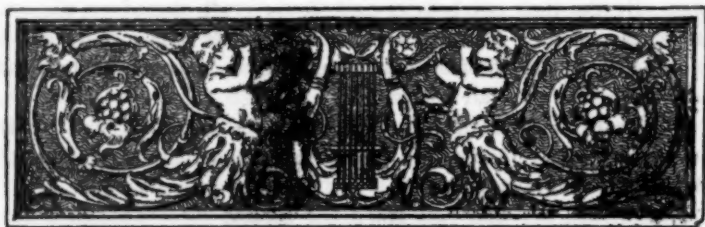
Whenever he does that, I can remember. He says that I must remember how they met him with cheers, because he was innocent. Yet, again, how can this be? For he murdered his wife.

Always, always, my memory is clear and sharp, fearfully clear, till I come to the time of the white surf.

But I know now, while Mordaunt stands here and looks at me, that it was he who told me to write it down; and I know now, as he looks at me again, after reading these last words, that he knows I have not written the trouble out of my brain.

He is looking over my shoulder now. I think, Mordaunt, that I will not try any more to rid myself of it. I think that I will voyage down to a place I know, a place of tumbled mountains that pitch off into a bottomless blue sea, and I will take a boat and sail till I see a hill like a scarred pyramid. I think that I shall go in there, where there is a great surf on hidden reefs.

I have looked at Mordaunt; and he has nodded to me, and his eyes are kind.



TUSCAN DAWN-SONG

BY KENNETH RAND

WHO is it sings by the Florentine gate?
(And the soft night pales to the morrow.)
 Patient art thou, O Lover, to wait
 Thy beloved so long at the Florentine gate.
(Ah, red flower of heart's sorrow!)

I hark to thy mandolin's lilting,
(See the white road stretch to the dawning)
 While yester-eve's roses are wilting
 To the tune of thy mandolin's lilting—
(And the breezes hail the morning).

See where the highway dips to the vale
(Heart o' the Dawn, but life is sweet!)—
 And the shadows flicker and faint and fail
 Where the magical highway dips to the vale—
(And the whole world waits at our feet!)

A PLEBE'S LIFE AT WEST POINT

By W. S. Sample

DANIEL DAILY BOONE was born in Licksillet, Kentucky, in 1891. Like many other military geniuses, he was "military" from childhood. He read of the exploits of Hannibal and Napoleon, and wept because there were no Alps in Bullitt County to cross—nothing but knobs and clay mounds. Hoping to go to West Point some day, he studied hard, and became so well prepared that when a competitive examination for a cadetship was held at Elizabethtown, Kentucky, he won the appointment. This was a proud day for young Boone.

The successful candidate was ordered to go to West Point for examination, and, upon reporting to the adjutant, he was placed in charge of an orderly and conducted to the hospital for physical examination. Clad only in his innocence and a Government sheet, he was ushered into the presence of the examining surgeons, who went over him from head to foot, noting his imperfections upon an official-looking document. Boone passed, and was again placed in charge of an orderly, to be taken to the cadet barracks. Here the candidates live in charge of a cadet lieutenant and three corporals, until they are licked into shape for plebe camp. This usually takes about two weeks.

Hazing new cadets is called "jumping plebes," and as Boone was crossing the area of barracks he received his first initiation into its mysteries. He was complacently trudging along behind the orderly when a squad of yearlings coming from the barracks, fresh from their tri-daily bath, rushed up to him and remarked, in that gentle, chiding voice used by upper-classmen when admonishing plebes, "Button up that coat, Mister. Hold up your head. Grind your shoulders back, Mister—more yet, do you understand? Drag in that chin; suck up your stomach. What do you mean by letting it drag on the ground that way?"

Boone halted before a room in the tenth division of the barracks, which was used as an office by the cadet corporals in charge of candi-

dates. There he was told to read the directions on the door and knock. Among other things he read:

Candidates are called "beasts" until they pass the exam. and go to camp, and during the first year plebes. Beasts will advance one step with the left foot, two steps with the right foot, and then take two steps to the right and three backward, in the meantime keeping head up, eyes on a tack in the wall, shoulders back, knees together, and feet at an angle of sixty degrees. Breathe through the nose in a subdued manner. When addressing upper-classmen always put a "Mr." before your name, and end all remarks with "sir." Knock three times cautiously before entering the room.

Boone knocked on the door twice very gently, and was greeted by a yell from the inside: "What do you mean by that unearthly racket, sir? Are you trying to knock the house down?" He knocked again, and was told to enter. Confused by the many orders, he stumbled over a chair and was welcomed with, "Wake up, Mr. Dumbjohn! Have you the blind staggers? How dare you fall over yourself in the presence of your superiors?"

The unfortunate plebe ventured to gaze around the room, whereupon he was told, "Keep your slimy eyes off me, and look at that tack in the wall." The cadet corporal then walked up and held his thumb under Boone's nose. The plebe eyed it for a minute in silence, noticing nothing abnormal, when the corporal yelled:

"Why don't you answer my question?"

"I did n't hear any question, sir," Boone replied.

"Well, wake up, Mister, and I'll explain the thumb manual. The thumb pointed directly up, in this manner, means, 'What is your name?' To the right, 'Where are you from?' To the left, 'Who was your pred?' And down, 'What is your P.C.S.?' 'Pred' means 'predecessor,' and 'P.C.S.' means 'previous condition of servitude.' Do you catch on?"

"Yes, sir."

"What is your name?"

"Mr. Daniel Daily Boone."

"Is that all, sir? Have n't you been told that beasts always put a 'sir' after everything they say?"

Being thoroughly confused, Boone got the "sir" on the wrong end and replied, "Sir, Daniel Daily Boone."

This was greeted with yells of derision. "Come here, fellows! Here's a beast that belongs to the English nobility. How dare you parade your title before the future defenders of this glorious republic? Don't you know that those who enter here leave hope and titles behind? Put that 'sir' on the right end of your name, sir."

"Mr. Daniel D. Boone, sir."

"Where are you from?"

"Kentucky, sir."

"And you claim a title other than Colonel or Judge? You're a fraud, sir! Are you any relation of Daniel Boone, the great hunter?"

"No, sir."

"Well, you ought to be. You'd better hunt up your pedigree. Now, how many back teeth has your grandmother?"

"None; she gums it."

"You are very B.J. [fresh], Mister; a little exercise will help your case. Are there any idiots in the family besides yourself?"

"No, sir."

"That's lucky; there's enough condensed idiocy in you for a dozen families."

After a few more questions relative to his "pred" and his "P.C.S.," Boone was shown to a room on the fourth floor, which he was told he would occupy until he went to camp.

The mental examination lasted five days and was very severe. Many men who have had a year at Yale, Harvard, or Princeton fail to pass the entrance examinations at West Point. Boone passed.

For two weeks the plebes lived in the barracks, their time being pretty well taken up with drills, and drawing clothes at the commissary's. While in barracks, the plebes wear a little ready-made jacket called a plebe skin. After the first suit, their clothes are all made to measure. The dress coat is so tight that when the poor plebe first tries it on he thinks a corset would be a relief.

While living in barracks the plebes were drilled about six times a day, by twenty third-class cadets, detailed for that purpose. They would double-time the plebes up and down that beautiful grassy plain until the perspiration poured off them in streams. Occasionally a cadet would halt his squad in the middle of the plain and chide them in a voice that could be heard a mile away: "What do you plebes mean by getting out of breath? Don't you know it is very unmilitary?"

In one of the drills Shooletz, a classmate of Boone from Pennsylvania, raised his hand to brush off a mosquito, when his drill-master yelled, "Don't you know that you should allow a mosquito to extract every drop of plebeian blood from your ignoble veins before raising your hand in ranks? Better die a thousand deaths, sir, than break one of the tens of thousands of West Point regulations!"

Shooletz and Boone afterwards landed in the awkward squad. This is the squad where plebes are given a double dose of drill, because they don't progress rapidly enough. Shooletz graduated at the head of his class, which shows that sometimes the best men get in the awkward squad.

On July 1 the plebes were marched into camp, which is situated on the bank of the Hudson, about a quarter of a mile north of the barracks. The cadets live here from about June 12 until August 28 of each year. The first, third, and fourth classes form the camp, the second class being away on furlough.

The upper-classmen occupy the tents on one side of the company street, and the plebes have the opposite side. Each upper-classman usually assigns to himself a plebe that he calls his special-duty man, whose business it is to keep the upper-classman's tent in order, let down the tent-flaps when it rains, make his bed when he goes to the hops, etc. The extra-duty man is usually selected from the plebes living in the opposite tent.

The reports published in newspapers about plebes blacking upper-classmen's boots are founded upon reportorial imagination, as the Government hires professional bootblacks. Usually three plebes are placed in a tent, and each is given a box called a "locker," in which to keep his personal belongings. A stretcher, in which other articles may be kept, is also strung up in the tent. The wash-basin is placed in front of the tent, the mirror is tacked to the tent-pole, and the bedding is piled in one corner with mathematical precision. The shoes are arranged in the background in order of size, uniformity, and cleanliness. This is all the tent is allowed to contain.

The locker is used as a seat, and to write letters on, the writer at such times sitting on the floor. Its principal use, however, is as an instrument of torture by upper-classmen, who make the plebes "brace" on it for half an hour at a time. To brace is to sit bolt upright, with chin drawn in, and shoulders so far back that the blades grind together—a very nice and easy position!

For the first days in camp, plebes are made to walk with their little finger on the seams of their trousers, palms of the hands to the front, and depressing their toes as they walk; that is, striking the ground with the toe of the shoe first. It is a very tiresome and ludicrous process, and is called "finning out."

A plebe walking quietly down the company street is observed by some visitors, when suddenly he throws out his hands and digs in his toes.

"Oh, Cadet Beanpole, why is that cadet walking so queerly?" asks a pretty girl.

"That isn't a cadet; it's a plebe. He walks that way because he wants to be graceful."

The true reason is that the poor plebe heard some upper-classman say: "Fin out there, Mister; dig in those toes; tear up the gravel. What do you mean by deadbeating and going bow-legged?"

The cadets march to meals, to church, to swimming, to dancing,

to everything. The plebes are placed in the rear rank of all formations; and in counting fours they are supposed to count for their front rank file.

The first meal a plebe eats in the mess hall with the corps is never forgotten. Twelve cadets are seated at a table, at least three of whom are plebes. The cadet in charge of the table sits at the head, while a plebe called "the gunner" sits at the foot. It is the duty of the gunner to call the table to attention each day, and to announce the kind of dessert. As there is no bill of fare, and the dessert is different every day, this is not always an easy job. If the gunner announces the dessert incorrectly, he is deprived of his portion.

The plebe on the gunner's right is called the cocoa corporal, and on the left, the water corporal. It is duty of the cocoa corporal to pour out the cocoa, and the water corporal pours the water.

The cadets often have a fierce and wonderfully built jelly called "Felix trembled." This concoction wobbles all over your plate, and derives its name from a cadet named Felix, one of the oldest living graduates, who ate some of the mixture and trembled violently. Cadets who eat it have been trembling ever since. Molasses is called "Sammy" by the upper-classmen. Plebes are required to call it the "Right Reverend Mr. Samuel, sir," until they qualify, which is done by eating seven slices of bread and molasses, when they may call it "Sammy."

After finishing their meals, plebes are required to sit bolt upright and gaze fixedly at a potato stuck on matches in the centre of the table. They are not allowed to feast their eyes upon the portraits of the great generals that decorate the walls of the mess-hall, but must sit and "brace" until the command, "Battalions, rise," is given, when they fall in and march back to camp.

Boone soon became proficient in the art of "double-step." This is West Point's most famous exercise, and consists simply in raising the knees alternately as high as possible. It is something like walking in the mud without going anywhere, and is the same as the sixteenth setting-up exercise in the army regulations. It is very beneficial, but can be indulged in to excess. Some plebes grow very fond of it—after they are yearlings. Another exercise sometimes given the plebes is the "chew chew." In this the victim lies on his back and draws up his legs and kicks vivaciously, at the same time drawing up his arms and thrusting them out, all the while blowing out his breath so that it sounds like "chew chew," from which the exercise gets its name. This is very exhausting, and is given only to plebes who are particularly "B. J."

Another diversion is called "swimming to Newburgh." In this the plebe gets on a tent-pole and goes through the motions of swimming.

These exercises are seldom, if ever, continued until injurious, and, while they may make the victim uncomfortable at the time, they are usually beneficial.

A plebe is asked to do only what all other cadets before him have done; and if he cannot stand a little horse-play and chaffing, he is very poor material for a military man. Such is the opinion of the great majority of cadets and army officers.

In the second week of camp life, Boone officiated as pall-bearer at a rat funeral. He and about a dozen of his classmates were awakened before reveillé, and given a dead rat to bury. The pall-bearers carried the rat in a pomade box on four matches. The formation was a cavalry one, and the plebes rode broomsticks and wore night-shirts. The funeral procession bumped into the O.D. (officer of the day), who broke up the formation and ordered the plebes to their tents. Several of them got "skinned" (reported) for being in the company street in night-shirts before reveillé.

Every time a cadet breaks a regulation he is reported. If he cannot give a satisfactory explanation, he receives one or more demerits; and when he gets a certain number he is dismissed, especially if he stands low in his class. A list of the offenses of each cadet is made out daily and read at supper formation the following evening by the cadet adjutant. This is called the "skin" list, and it is virtually impossible for a cadet to avoid appearing on it at some time during his career. An offender is required to write an explanation for each breach of the regulations, and as he sometimes misspells a word or fails to dot an "i" or cross a "t" or to fold the sheet properly, he is reported again for each of these errors, and thus piles up several skins, trying to get one off. If his explanation is satisfactory, he gets his skin off; if not, it is said to stick, which it usually does. On Boone's first visit to chapel he was reported as follows:

Boone, D.D. Button off coat in chapel.
Same, Collar too high in chapel.
Same, Improperly shaved in chapel.

These skins all stuck, and Boone acquired ten demerits.

Every cadet must be smooth-shaven, and must shave himself. Boone cut his face once or twice, and at inspection the cadet officer said to him, "What do you mean, Mr. Boone, by coming to inspection looking like an ad for a butcher shop? Don't you know it's against the regulations to commit suicide?" Another plebe left a few stray hairs on his face and was jumped on with the query, "Are you emulating Moses and Aaron with those whiskers?" As a rule, cadets get more demerits during plebe year than in all the rest of their course.

In camp white trousers are worn, and on very hot days the entire uniform is white. These trousers must be clean at every formation, and they are always starched as stiff as boards. The crease in them must be preserved at any cost, and to do this cadets often climb on a locker and slide into them. Some cadets have more than fifty pairs of these trousers. After graduation they are given to the plebes.

One amusing feature of camp life is "sounding off" time by the plebes. Every formation, and everything else at the academy, must be done strictly on the minute. Only death could excuse a cadet for being late, and that excuse would be accepted but once. As the upper-classmen do not care to look at their watches often, they have the plebes "sound off" the time for them. One plebe in each company is appointed official chronologist, and it is his duty to see that the plebe watches are correct. If there is any error, the chronologist does a hundred double-steps, while the plebe with the faulty time-piece does two hundred.

There is at West Point a hatchet which tradition says the Queen of Sheba used to break the ice in her interview with Solomon. This hatchet, by reincarnation, has appeared in the cadet corps, and is kept by some enterprising yearling who is called the "Great and Only Original Exponentiator of the Right Royal Relic and the Guardian Angel of the Queen of Sheba." The hatchet is the "right royal relic," and double-stepping is termed "putting double jewels in the Queen of Sheba's crown." Each plebe is required to kowtow to and salute the hatchet with becoming reverence. It is safe to say that this hatchet has been kissed by more cadets than all the famous belles and flirts who ever visited West Point in the good old summer-time and rung the changes on the hearts of Uncle Sam's susceptible wards.

During the encampment there is a hop or concert every night, and pretty girls are as plentiful as June roses. In West Point parlance, a pretty girl is a "spoony *femme*"; to make love is to "spoon"; and a ladies' cadet is a "spoonoid." All cadets become sentimental at times, especially on Flirtation Walk.

Dear old Flirtation Walk! No sketch of West Point would be complete without a description of you. Lives there an ex-cadet with soul and heart so dead as not to be still sentimental when he recalls Flirtation Walk? It is about a mile and a half in length, winding in and out among the cliffs of the glorious Hudson, in some places almost washed by the river, while in others it is hundreds of feet above. Superbly beautiful by nature, all this has been wonderfully enhanced by art. Along the path are found cosy little nooks, created partly by nature and partly by man, just too large for one and just too small for three. These are known as "spooning places." Here all our great generals, Grant, Lee, Sherman, Sheridan, and others, made

love, as their names are now indelibly carved upon these weather-beaten rocks. Here also is found the name of Edgar Allan Poe. Poe was not much of a spoonoid during his cadet days, but he often visited Flirtation Walk to write poetry when he ought to have been boning mathematics.

At West Point, plebes are supposed to learn to make love as well the art of war, and as they are not allowed to "spoon" the girls nor attend hops until they have been at the Academy a year they are often ordered by the upper-classmen to court each other for practice. Many side-splitting scenes are created by this love-making among plebes, as some of them enact the ladies' part admirably. They have to do well to please their audience of upper-classmen, who are of course experts.

All cadets must know how to swim, and the plebes are taught this art in the Hudson River, about two miles from camp. When the plebe can keep afloat for ten minutes he is qualified, and is not required to take any more swimming lessons. Plebes are also taught dancing during plebe camp.

Cadets in camp rise at 5.30 A.M., and after roll-call the company streets are policed. This is done by the plebes, and it must be done well. A match left in the street is called a "saw log" by the cadets in charge, and a piece of thread a "cable." Thirty minutes later the battalions march to breakfast. After breakfast comes guard-mounting, and then the plebes have light battery drill, swimming, and dancing, until noon. In the afternoon is company drill and, later, dress parade. This is a beautiful sight. Nowhere can you find a better drilled set of men than the West Point cadets. They move as one body, and no other organization can touch them, not even the middies.

After parade the "skin" list is read, and then comes supper, followed by a concert or hop, and, at ten P.M., taps. Intermingled with all this is the hazing of the plebes. A yearling returns from a hop and has only a few minutes to get in bed before taps. His extra-duty man has forgotten to make down his bed, so after taps the cadet goes across the street and drags the luckless plebe, bedding and all, into the middle of the company street.

The height of a cadet's ambition is to deadbeat some of the numerous drills. The only way to do this is to get sick and go to the hospital, or to be blessed with a rain at drill-time. But the Lord seldom sends rain then, and a plebe often thinks he will have to die before he can get into the hospital, as he is required to be vastly sicker than an upper-classman. Whenever a cloud appears near drill-time, the plebes can be heard whistling an air called the Missouri National. This is an invocation for rain, and was written by a distinguished cadet named Savay, for the especial benefit of plebes.

It seems to be the impression that there are many fights at West

Point. This is incorrect. There are very few, and those that do take place are with Nature's weapons and are perfectly fair. The fights usually take place before reveillé, in old Fort Clinton, and sometimes one or both of the debaters visit the hospital after the argument. No ill feeling is exhibited afterwards, and these fights are only a practical demonstration of some of the countless theories in the West Point text-books. Cadet tradition recalls a number of fights that Sheridan had at the Academy.

A man is better in every way for having passed through plebe camp at West Point. It eliminates conceit and makes him self-reliant and manly. The benefit derived lasts through life, go where he may and do what he will. It polishes the rough diamond; only faulty stones are injured.



¿QUIEN SABE?*

BY MADGE MORRIS

“**W**HERE do the waters go that go
To the sands of the bleached Mojave?”
Asked I an ancient Indian man
(Lingering trace of his vanished race).

“Do they sink in the sand
To the underland?”

With never a bend of his stately head,
Nor look, or the lurk of a smile, he said:

“¿Quien sabe?”

“Surely thou knowest, thou primal man!
Brood of the desert's birth and ban,—
Wise as the rattlesnake, old as the sun,
Where do the rivers run that run
To the sands of thy grim Mojave?
Do they sink in the sand
To the underland?—

Down where the red volcano's glow
Lieth await for the underflow?
Down where the salt-sea left its scum
When the earth was void and the deep was dumb?”

“¿Quien sabe?”

* Who knows?

THE MOVABLE FEAST

By Hulbert Footner

Author of "Two on the Trail," etc.

MRS. GASSAWAY was mixing batter for a cake in a yellow earthenware bowl on the kitchen table. She was a tall, angular woman, slightly bent in at the waist, like a wasp. Her faded yellow hair was tied at the nape of her neck with a butterfly bow of black silk, much ironed. Unlike most thin people, she was very good-natured.

"Well, Sophie, what do you think of the house?" she asked. She spoke in the hushed tones of the incorrigibly romantic, and she had the short-sighted, impractical, ecstatic eyes of the same.

"Very nice, I'm sure," answered her sister primly. Miss Sophie Waddy was oppressed by her green silk Sunday waist and her inactivity in the kitchen.

"Ah!" said Mrs. Gassaway, "this is what I dreamed of all the years we lived in rooms! A parlor with the blinds pulled down! An upstairs! A back-yard!"

"Can't I do something?" asked Miss Waddy, moving uncomfortably on her chair.

"You sit right where you are, Sophie," said Mrs. Gassaway firmly. "You have never been treated as company in all your life, and it's high time. Why, as soon as we moved in, three weeks ago, I said to myself, 'I'll have Sophie for a visit, and she shall have her Chance.' Eulalia, my dear, get me the vanilla extract from the cupboard."

Eulalia Gassaway was a pale child of sixteen, with the crushed, resentful air of one long subject to a romantic tyranny. As she turned to the cupboard, her mother, with the assumption that she was now out of hearing, asked in a loud aside:

"What did you think of Alfred, Sophie?"

Miss Waddy bridled and tossed her head. "I don't think of him at all," she said tartly.

"I sent him to the station on purpose with the wagon, instead of Pa," said Mrs. Gassaway. "Alfred is quite excited about you. What did you talk about on your way home?"

"Nothing at all," said Miss Waddy. "He was showing off with my trunk how strong he was, and he dropped it and broke a hinge! After-

wards he just sat on the seat of the wagon beside me, and talked to the horse, making out I was n't there at all!"

"You're twenty-nine, my dear," said Mrs. Gassaway mildly. "Alfred is saving up his wages, and as soon as he has enough to buy a horse—an old one, to begin with—Pa is going to take him into partnership, so he won't have to pay him wages. Gassaway & Garvey, General Express! And you and I sisters. It would be so fitting!"

Miss Waddy tossed her head again.

"There ain't no vanilla, Ma," said Eulalia, turning around.

"Ain't, my love?" said Mrs. Gassaway reproachfully. "How often must I tell you?"

"Well, there are n't none, then," said Eulalia sulkily.

"We'll do without," said Mrs. Gassaway brightly. "Oh, I'm so full of plans!" she went on. "There's you, and there's Eulalia. Here she is growing up, and I want her to have advantages. So as soon as we got settled, I decided to kill a bird with two stones, and that is why I am giving this party to-morrow. I have asked Mrs. Biggerbite from next door——"

"Bickerdike, Ma," corrected Eulalia.

"Of course," said Mrs. Gassaway. "A dear soul, though she has let her figure get away from her. And Mrs. Easter, Mrs. Bassenger, Mrs. Prissy, and the lady in the big house at the corner, Mrs. Pincus Finkel."

Miss Waddy was impressed. "How did you get to know them all so soon?" she inquired.

"Well, at first I *was* at a loss," confessed Mrs. Gassaway, "but it all came around quite naturally. One day Royal George brought in a yellow cat from the street. It had been fighting. I smoothed its fur down as well as I could, and tied one of Eulalia's hair-ribbons around its neck, and put it in a basket, and called on the different ladies that I wanted to know, to see if it belonged to them. It did n't, but we got quite friendly, and before I left I asked each one to take tea with me."

"Do you think they'll come?"

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Gassaway. "They will all want to see what we have. Oh, I have it all planned! We'll give them tea and cake, and, just by good luck, Pa brought home a keg of Malaga grapes last night that was refused because they were spoiled. But there are lots of good ones! We'll pick them over to-morrow morning. Eulalia shall play the piano for them, and you and I will make conversation, Sophie. Do you mind if I call you Sopha after this? Sophie sounds so like what common people say. Dear me! All my life I have dreamed of giving a party. I can hardly believe that to-morrow is the day!"

With a great preliminary scraping of feet outside, the door opened and Pa came in. Mr. Gassaway had unmistakably the look of the

driver of a light wagon, an aspect only slightly horsey and brisk, as of one accustomed to hopping off and on frequently. He had red cheeks and plenty of hair, except on his head.

"What brings you home so early, Pa?" asked Mrs. Gassaway, after greetings had been exchanged all around.

"Great news! Great news!" said Pa. "We're going to move!"

Mrs. Gassaway's spoon clattered into the bowl. "What, again?" she cried.

"Hold on a bit!" said Pa. "Wait till you hear. The landlord come to me to-day, and says he, 'Gassaway, I've sold that lot your house is built on——'"

"My sweet little back-yard!" murmured Mrs. Gassaway.

"Hear me out, can't you?" said Pa fretfully. "'But,' says he, 'I don't want to put you out in the street, so I'll make a deal with you: I'll make you a present of the house you're living in if you'll move it to a lot I have at the foot of the Sherman Avenue hill. You can pay me for the lot in instalments.'"

Mrs. Gassaway began to look up again. "Then, it would be our very own," she said, looking around the kitchen. "That would be nice."

"Sure," said Pa. "That's what I says. I jumps at the chance, and inside an hour we had everything fixed up. The wreckers will be here first thing to-morrow morning."

"To-morrow!" cried Mrs. Gassaway, Sophie, and Eulalia in simultaneous tones of horror. "To-morrow's the party!" Mrs. Gassaway collapsed weakly in a chair.

Pa scratched his head. "Sho!" he said. "And I've made the contract and paid over the money. And I've turned over our route to Wickens for the day, so Alfred and me can be free. You'll have to put it off."

Mrs. Gassaway, sitting on the chair with her hands in her lap, made a picture of restrained despair. "Think of the grapes!" she said, raising her eyes. She extended a tragic hand towards the bowl. "And the cake—it's mixed! If you'd only let me know before I broke the eggs!"

They were all confounded by her emotion. It was Mrs. Gassaway herself who finally broke the silence.

"What do they do to a house when they move it?" she asked.

"Well," said Pa, "a little frame cottage like this is no great shakes of a job. After the wreckers jack her up and put her on the trucks, me and Alfred is going to do the rest. I've borrowed the rigging, and our own horse will pull you."

"Down the middle of the street?" asked Mrs. Gassaway.

"Sure," said Pa; "but no call to be uneasy. We'll handle you as gentle as a case of eggs."

After a period of cogitation, Mrs. Gassaway got up with the air of a woman who has made up her mind. Her lips were squeezed together, and her eyes had a far-away gleam of romantic determination. "We will give the party, any way," she said. "It will be different from any party that ever was given. It will be the talk of the neighborhood!" She recommenced stirring the cake.

At three o'clock next afternoon the Gassaway house was being drawn slowly through Parr Street, kitchen foremost. Seen from behind, with the roof coming down over the door like a bang over a low forehead, windows at either side for eyes, the door for a nose, and the bare spot beneath where the step had been taken off, for a mouth, it had strongly the look of a face. It was a shocked face, with wide open eyes, as if the respectable little house, through no fault of its own, found itself in a position it was unable to explain before the houses which kept their places.

Into the roadway ahead an iron stake was driven, to which was attached a drum with a long projecting pole, and an arrangement of pulleys and ropes. The Gassaways' horse, Job, was hitched to the pole. As he walked around he turned the drum and wound up the rope, a long rope that creaked back and forth between the pulleys ever so many times, and drew the house forward inch by inch. Job was a slender bay. Like all mature beings, he expressed great character in his face, and at present it was wearing a depressed and disgusted look as he made his endless little rounds. He often stopped and looked over his shoulder at the drum, as much as to ask what ailed the infernal contraption that it should make a horse dizzy.

Alfred, a serious young Hercules with a ruddy complexion, held the rope in his hands, and coiled it as it came off the drum, while Pa stood on the sidewalk, proudly watching the progress of events, and conversing with the passers-by. Royal George Gassaway, aged twelve, had taken a day off from school without rebuke, in honor of the great event. He acted as ring-master. When the house overtook the drum they pulled up the stake, and drove it in further down the street.

From the sidewalk of Parr Street, Mrs. Gassaway, Miss Waddy, and Eulalia could be seen through the kitchen window, polishing the best cups, and making the thousand and one other preparations necessary to a party. Within, everything was much the same as on the day before, but it was the same with a difference. Mrs. Gassaway was full of a suppressed excitement; her eyes looked bigger and more ecstatic than ever.

"Is n't it funny?" she said. "To be housekeeping in the middle of the street! It gives me such a turn every time I look up and see Mrs. Prissy's front door going by, instead of my own back fence!"

"It has a kind of a crawly feeling all over inside, like it was alive," said Miss Waddy apprehensively.

"That's only when the horse stops and starts up again," said Mrs. Gassaway. "Eulalia, my dear, you had better dust the parlor again. I can't imagine where it all comes from!"

"It's shook out of the cracks," said Eulalia dejectedly.

"How will the company like it, do you suppose?" suggested Miss Waddy apprehensively.

"We won't let on," said her sister. "I have always read that the extract of good manners was never letting anything on. You just watch me, and see what I do."

"They won't come," said Eulalia morosely. "When they seen us turn the corner, they thought that was the last of us."

"Bless me!" cried Mrs. Gassaway. "I suppose I ought to have let them know. What should I do?"

"Write notes," said Miss Waddy, "and send Royal George around with them."

"There is n't time to write so many," said Mrs. Gassaway. "I'll have to write one for all." She hastily provided herself with writing materials, and sat down at the kitchen table. "How should I put it?" she said, biting her pen reflectively.

"Write it like they do cards of thanks in the newspapers, as if you was somebody else," suggested Miss Waddy.

"Of course!" said Mrs. Gassaway, beginning to write. "Call Royal George," she said to Eulalia over her shoulder.

She sat back presently, holding the letter off at arm's length. "How does this sound?" she asked. "'Mrs. Gassaway begs to inform all that there will be no postponement of her party on account of the house unexpectedly moving this afternoon. Follow us down Parr to Sherman, and you can't miss us.'"

"Just enough and no more," said Miss Waddy approvingly.

Royal George was despatched on his rounds.

Half an hour later the first guest arrived in the person of Mrs. Easter, wearing her feather boa. She was the wife of a grocery salesman, a small, sharp woman, a Christian scientist, and much looked up to in Parr Street. The front door was a good three feet above the roadway, but Royal George was in attendance with a soap-box, and Mrs. Easter was easily boosted on board. Mrs. Gassaway received her in a glow.

"How do you do, Mrs. Easter!" she cried. "Let me make you known to my sister, Miss Sopha Waddy. My Eulalia you have met, of course. Have the rocking-chair. Is n't it a lovely day!"

Mrs. Bassenger and Mrs. Prissy were next seen hovering uncertainly on the sidewalk. Mrs. Gassaway threw up the window and stuck her

head out. "Come right in!" she cried. "Royal George, help the ladies to mount."

With the assistance of a passer-by pushing from below, and Mrs. Gassaway pulling from above, they were safely drawn on board. Mrs. Gassaway was hospitably flustered. "Welcome to our little home!" she cried. "Our Gumbalow, as we call it. Sit right down. You'll find the sofa comfortable, but don't pull it out from the wall!"

The next to show up was Mrs. Bickerdike. Mrs. Bickerdike was of more than ample proportions. She was dressed in countless yards of black cashmere, which she hung upon herself in a peculiar style. She came trundling down the street without any evidences of feet, looking like a short, fat funeral urn voluminously draped. She surveyed the gap between roadway and door-sill dubiously, but Royal George assured her that the other ladies had had no trouble, and the rattle of tea-cups from the kitchen tempted her.

By this time quite a large and interested group had gathered in the street, watching the progress of the bungalow with the party going on inside. Half a dozen volunteered their assistance to Mrs. Bickerdike, and with a deal of shoving and hauling and gasping she was finally placed on top of the soap-box, where she stood teetering dangerously, one hand clutched in Royal George's hair.

But so much time had been consumed in this operation that the house had gone on a couple of feet, and Mrs. Bickerdike said she could n't make the remaining step. They had to take her down again, and move the box up. Mrs. Bickerdike wanted to go home, but her helpers would not hear of such a thing. Another grand effort was made, and this time she got one foot planted on the door-sill. But there she stuck—and the house still moving relentlessly inch by inch away from the box. They could n't let Pa know in time, because the house was between. An expression of piteous dismay overspread Mrs. Bickerdike's rosy countenance. In the very nick of time, Mesdames Gassaway, Easter, Bassenger, and Prissy, with a united effort, hauled her aboard. There was a loud ripping sound from somewhere, and cheers from the crowd.

"How do you do!" said Mrs. Gassaway delightedly. "So good of you to drop in!"

"How'm I ever going to get out again, I should like to know!" said Mrs. Bickerdike desperately.

"Never fear," said Mrs. Gassaway. "We'll be there by that time. Do sit down."

Mrs. Bickerdike gloomily surveyed the chair her hostess drew up, and shook her head. "Rush bottoms never hold me," she said.

Mrs. Gassaway hastened to get the pastry-board to lay across the

seat, and Mrs. Bickerdike sank down, fanning herself feebly. She was the last to come. Mrs. Pincus Finkel disappointed.

"Tea, Sopha," said Mrs. Gassaway brightly. "Meanwhile, my daughter will favor us on the piano. Eulalia, my love."

Ahead of the house, Pa had decided that they would never get there at this rate, and Royal George was putting Job through his smartest paces. Eulalia sat down at the piano and played "Sailing, Sailing, Over the Bounding Main."

"The motion is not at all unpleasant," said Mrs. Prissy politely.

"They say at sea no amount of tossing will affect you if you eat hearty," said Mrs. Bassenger, with a glance toward the kitchen.

"There is no such thing as sea-sickness to a Christian Scientist," said Mrs. Easter.

Mrs. Bickerdike placed one hand below her bosom and feebly waved the other at Eulalia. "Please, *please*," she murmured. "It reminds me of something I would rather forget. I am a very poor sailor."

A diversion was created by the appearance of Miss Waddy in the kitchen doorway, wearing an expression of dismay. "There ain't no water in the tap," she faltered.

"It was disconnected," said Mrs. Easter smartly.

"Of course," said Mrs. Gassaway. She had an inspiration. "Pass out the kettle to Royal George, Sopha, and tell him to borrow from a street-sprinkler."

There is a hole on Parr Street near Sherman. Load after load of broken stone has been dumped there. The bungalow reached the place at this moment. There was a shake and a tremble, and Pa in crayons came down from the wall on the run. A piece of glass cut a sickening gash in his forehead. The callers gasped, and looked desirously toward the door; but the soap-box had been left up the street.

Mrs. Gassaway rose to the occasion heroically. "The dust-pan, Eulalia," she said sweetly. Turning to Mrs. Easter, she went on, "Christian Science must be such a comfort! I should like to know it."

There were untoward sounds from the kitchen, too, and presently an extraordinary black apparition appeared in the doorway. The callers screamed. Upon a close inspection, Mrs. Gassaway recognized her sister, almost completely blanketed with soot.

"The stove-pipe's fell down," said Miss Waddy hysterically. "I tried to stick it up, and it come out all over me!"

Mrs. Gassaway swallowed hard. "Then we'll have lemonade instead of tea," she said instantly. "Eulalia, darling, get the lemons from the cellar."

Eulalia obediently hastened to the cellar door. There was a cry, and a muffled thump from beneath the floor.

"Mercy!" cried Mrs. Gassaway. "I forgot we had to leave the cellar behind! The poor child!"

However, Eulalia was presently assisted through the front door, a little dusty, but otherwise uninjured, except as to her feelings.

By this time Pa had the bungalow straightened out on the Sherman Avenue hill, and they enjoyed a quiet moment inside while Job was dragging the drum ahead, and Alfred prepared to drive the stake in a new place. However, the respite was brief, for the bungalow, left to its own devices, suddenly gave a little shake like a person making up his mind, and started to move slowly down-hill of its own volition.

The onlookers in the street started, gasped, and rubbed their eyes. Everybody began to shout advice at once. Pa, hearing the racket, looked around and turned pale. He had not counted on the assistance of gravity in moving his domicile. Inside the house they did not immediately guess what had happened. Only the heaving and bumping began again, but worse than before. The clock fell from the mantel to the floor, the hands flew around the face in the most extraordinary way, it struck nineteen times and came to a dead stop. Mrs. Gassaway glanced out of the window at the moving landscape.

"We shall get there sooner than I expected," she said happily.

The callers, however, were losing their nerve. "It's so unusual to see the floor bend," faltered Mrs. Prissy.

"Do you suppose there's anything the matter?" inquired Mrs. Waddy. "See the people, how they are running and waving their arms!"

"I think we had better sit on the floor," stammered Mrs. Bickerdike. "It's nearer!"

Eulalia and Miss Waddy burst in from the kitchen. "Ma! Sister! The house is running away!" they cried, casting themselves upon Mrs. Gassaway.

Everybody made haste to sit on the floor, where they remained in a circle during the terrible moments that followed, clutching the carpet, and staring wildly into one another's pale faces.

By this time the house on wheels was careering down the middle of Sherman Avenue like some nightmare monster running amuck. The fixed houses seemed to look on in astonishment that one of their number could so far forget itself. Pa, Alfred, Royal George, and Job in a daze watched it sweep past them. Job was the first to recover himself. He hurriedly returned to his stable. Roaring with excitement, the crowd pursued the bungalow. Not one of them had ever seen a house coasting down-hill before. The people who come running to the doors almost collapsed at what they saw—a house heaving, staggering, bumping, down the street, as if it were possessed of devils.

Inside, the state of things can better be imagined than described. The glass shook out pane by pane; the chimneys collapsed with a pounding of bricks like cannon-balls on the roof; crash succeeded crash like half a dozen thunder-storms rolled into one. Finally, at the foot of the hill, the bungalow swerved into the gutter and fetched up against a telegraph-pole with a crack that knocked the house endwise, and slewed around everything inside, opposite to where it was before.

For an instant perfect silence succeeded in the parlor. The ladies sat up among the ruins, and blinked at one another through a dense cloud of plaster dust. Fortunately, their hats and their coiffures had saved them from injury when the ceiling came down; but the millinery was wrecked.

Mrs. Gassaway, as befitted the hostess, was the first to find speech. "Well, here we are!" she said, shaking the plaster out of her hair.

"Let me out! Let me out!" moaned Mesdames Easter, Prissy, Bassenger, and Bickerdike in unison.

Then the populace swarmed aboard, and confusion reigned. The first to come through the front door was Alfred. He swooped on the prostrate Miss Waddy. "My darling, are you killed?" he roared.

Mrs. Gassaway could never have described what happened after that. The guests were taken home. The firemen, the police, and the newspaper reporters arrived. The populace struggled for bits of plaster to take home as souvenirs of the great day. She was reduced to tears at last.

"Well, any way," she said to her husband, pointing to the unresisting Miss Waddy, who, soot and all, was still clasped in Alfred's arms—"well, any way, there's one of the things accomplished that I set out to do!"



TO ONE AWAY

BY SARA TEASDALE

I HEARD a cry in the night—
A thousand miles it came,
Sharp as a flash of light:
My name, my name!

It was your voice I heard;
You waked and loved me so;
I send you back this word:
I know, I know!

BEAUTIFUL SEBASTIANA

By Marie Van Vorst

Author of "In Ambush," "Amanda of the Mill," etc.

ON the balcony of the Trinaeria Hotel in Messina a young American tourist sat finishing what had been a very welcome luncheon. Beneath him lay the noisy, populous city, and farther out around its coast spread the divine sea.

The flies took possession of his piled plate of figs and dates. Dentwater called the *camerière*, and the servant, who had waited upon him excellently, came eagerly running toward the stranger.

"Vuole, Signore?"

Dentwater gave his order, and the man beamed and bowed and took away the fruit. The traveller's eyes followed the man who slipped softly back into the shade of the inner dining-room.

The Sicilian waiter, a slender fellow, presented a pitiful figure to his patron. He was evidently ill-paid, mean, and poor. His linen, though spotless, was ragged; and his clothes, too large in the legs, too short in the coat, and too wide about the thin shoulders, had served for other men of his profession before his era.

In the southern atmosphere of light and sun, poverty is one of the lesser evils; but the servant in the dark restaurant, slipping from table to table, bowing, receiving guests and speeding them away, running back and forth to the kitchen, returning with his service of food, agile, careful, touchingly eager, arrested Dentwater's attention.

It was his eagerness that obliged Dentwater to consider him. The dark face, the painfully neat hair, the waxed mustache, were typical, not distinctive; but the eager eyes, the sensitive mouth over which a smile hovered lightly and as quickly disappeared, appealed strongly to the Englishman.

"*Camerière!*" he called, and again the shabby figure of Francesco flitted forward. The traveller paid his bill with intention. Francesco bowed, took the money to the desk, and when he returned found his gentleman reading a letter.

"The change, *Signore*."

"Oh, that's for you, *amico*."

"*Mille grazie, Signore!*" Francesco's face flushed.

"Speak any English?"

"No, *Signore*."

"Never been to America, then?"

"No, *Signore*."

"Better go over." Dentwater lit a cigarette. "You can make plenty of money there. You people do."

"*Scusi*, is the *Signore* an American? I thought," Francesco added, "that he was an Englishman."

Dentwater smiled. "Very keen of you."

Dentwater held a letter he had written, sealed, and addressed: "Alla, Contessa di Fiori Mille, Pallazzo Fiori Mille."

To the left opened the passage from the dining-room on the kitchens—to a long window at the end of the corridor, which looked on the sea. Dentwater could see the blue sweep of the Mediterranean—the reddish sails of the boats, and a white sail here and there, like the petal of a camelia. All framed for him by a few feet of glass, there stretched before him the exquisite picture of a sunny Mediterranean port. Close to the window embrasure, as if a giant pair of shears had cut out of profound shade the picture of a human man and set him there, Dentwater saw Francesco huddled against the light. The waiter's arms hung limply at his sides; he too was looking out at the port and on the placid sea. The poor figure was the profound expression of desolation and disaster. As he just then turned about, Dentwater saw the patient creature's face scarred by flowing tears.

Not wishing to intrude on such an intimate moment in a human life, Dentwater stepped back, and found at his side the little proprietor, with whom downstairs he had exchanged some few words before luncheon. The traveller touched the hotel-keeper's arm and nodded toward the man in the window.

"What's happened to that poor devil? What is the matter with him?"

And, not without sympathy, the proprietor shrugged at the inevitableness of each man's tragedy.

"Oh, somebody has just told him about 'Bastiana.'"

"They never seem real," the Contessa Fiori Mille said to Dentwater.

On yet another Sicilian balcony, above the snow-white and pinkish town, he looked down over the hill-slopes into the cup-like circle that held Messina. Rows of houses—a dash of brilliant green, a blaze as of rose-petals where the pinkish buildings scattered here and there like flowers; contour of graceful buildings, and the sharp edge where the shore met the azure of the lapping, captivating sea.

"You think they are not real? Well, I expect you should know, for you are familiar with the *Messinese*."

"I know them. They are all emotion, all excitement, all sensation."

"*Emotion* is not real, then?"

She shrugged. "H'm, I don't know. At any rate, the *Messinese* are perfectly adorable, but they are children."

"I fancy that if you had seen a certain chap's face down there at the Trinacria, as I saw it an hour ago, you would have thought that there was something real in him."

"Don't let me shock you, my friend," the Contessa said seriously. "I love my husband's people. I could n't be happy in Messina otherwise, could I? And many of them *are* my friends. But I am more Anglo-Saxon than you are, I really think. And it is like living in a picture-book here—in this white villa in perpetual sunshine—in perpetual summer. Sometimes I feel as though I were a part of an illustrated story—with highly-colored illustrations, most of the time. I have got used to the glow, of course."

"But does n't it ever seem dull?"—with something like eagerness in his words. "Is n't it ever very lonely?"

"Yes," she acknowledged; "one cannot make companions of children, pictures, and fairy-stories."

"But your friends come here——"

"Yes, and go; and so do I, of course—to Paris, Naples, and Rome; but the fogs and the rain drive me home to this sunlight."

Dentwater stretched his hand out across the table.

"One of your friends has come to-day," he said, and he held out his hand.

"It all seems so unreal," she murmured again.

Dentwater, his hand outstretched, murmured more intently still:

"Oh, there *are* real things! There *are* real things; and I have a thousand minds to tell you some of them!"

And he proceeded to do so.

When he reached the Trinacria it was past midnight. He ordered something in the café, where the proprietor himself served him. Looking about, Dentwater asked:

"And where is Francesco?"

"He has gone, *Signore*," the innkeeper replied. "He took the boat you came in, back to Naples. He is to sail from Naples to America to-morrow."

"To look for 'Bastiana?"

"To look for 'Bastiana."

"Why, he is a *real lover*!" Dentwater exclaimed delightedly.

"*Ecco!*" shrugged the innkeeper, as though to be a real lover was to him the most natural thing in the world.

The Englishman, draining his glass, drank in silence to the depart-

ure of the Sicilian; and said to himself with satisfaction: "A man in love will find there are real things everywhere!"

". . . . So are death and the stiletto," Richard Dentwater said; "and as we go on you will some time see how realistic this candy-colored place can be."

The Contessa replied to him:

"There are quantities of tales such as you have just told me."

And he accepted, undisturbed:

"Of course, and you know the tragedy in the Chinese Empire, when after the garden party there was nothing new to tell the Emperor?"

"I can imagine!" The Contessa laughed. "And I beg your pardon. If you really want to make me sad by your narrative, I won't prevent you."

"Bellissima 'Bastiana is the most beautiful creature on the coast; and 'Bastiana was engaged to be married to Francesco. There was a family debt of honor to be paid off in some fashion or other by some one or another."

"As I said before," the Contessa laughed, "those things are usually paid off with a stiletto."

But her friend was not prevented. "No, this was only a vulgar money affair—no romance in it—and they, poor dears, in some way or another had to discharge that liability. So 'Bastiana, following the trail of rich Americans, went to America, and Francesco stayed here to work. When the last soldi had been paid up, 'Bastiana was to return to Messina, and the wedding-bells were to ring."

Here the Contessa began to be troubled.

"Poor things! I wish you had told me this before."

"I only knew it yesterday, myself."

"I will pay off the rest of that debt at once for them," she offered, and Dentwater kissed her hand.

"Very sweet and kind of you, but they would n't take it. It seems, they are as proud as peacocks, and, moreover, the debt is all paid."

"How perfectly wonderful, Richard!"

Dentwater nodded solemnly. "Paid up soldi by soldi."

He lit a cigarette and smoked thoughtfully, going on with the story which had touched him.

"The poor old chap kept the girl's courage up from this side, and from her side she kept up his courage."

The Contessa was leaning very near to him.

"Of course she is dead," she murmured. "Why don't you tell me so? After all, why *do* you tell me such a melancholy love-story?"

Looking toward her devotedly, Dentwater said:

"Because I shall always be selfish enough to share with you every-

thing that pleases or grieves me; as a man shares with a perfect companion everything in the world."

She forgave his egotism.

"But 'Bastiana is *not* dead," he went on after a little. "Francesco has not heard a thing about her for a long, long time. That meant, of course, a great deal of suffering and anxiety, I expect, in the humble heart. At any rate, yesterday he heard enough to make up for no end of a wait. A native of this town has just come back from America (on the same boat that fetched me from Naples), and before his heels could cool, of course, he came and told Francesco just that which a man would rather learn his sweetheart dead than hear. 'Bastiana has grown to be a fine lady, and it has been comparatively easy for her to get the money which went so promptly and regularly to pay her debt."

"Oh, dear!" breathed the Contessa. "Poor thing! She was, of course, far too pretty—you said she was the most beautiful woman on the coast."

"The most beautiful *Italian* on the coast," Dentwater corrected. "But I did n't say she was the most beautiful woman in the world!"

The Contessa admitted that he had not been so absurd.

"This Francesco," her friend went on, "is a perfectly ripping sort of chap—he strikes me as being rather *real* for a picture-book. Directly I had gone he went out, found his communicative and loquacious compatriot, and stabbed him within an inch of his life, effectually shutting his mouth for him. That fellow, at least, will not talk in Messina about 'Bastiana's reputation! Then, much appreciated and protected by his friends, Francesco girded up his loins and got on the ship. He has gone to America to fetch his old sweetheart home."

The Contessa was beginning to be interested.

"Oh, *she* won't come back!"

Dentwater admitted that very probably she would n't come. "And the poor fellow's troubles are only just beginning. But he has gone, and while he believes in his heart all that he has heard, I have n't a doubt he denies everything stoutly and calls his informant a liar."

"He is decidedly a brick!" conceded the Contessa, who remembered some American expressions.

In the latter part of December of the following year Dentwater again found himself on shipboard, steaming toward Messina.

As though a magnet of destiny drew them together, he had, singularly enough, found Francesco. Not in America, but on this self-same boat, engaged in the same dreary occupation in which he had been employed when he first arrested Dentwater's attention. Dentwater thought the man had the face of a martyr. He had not seen him until they had been some hours at sea, and in his own happier state he almost

turned from the misery in the look of the humble Italian. But Francesco sought him out. Coming softly up to Dentwater, the only occupant of the smoking-room, he laid a fresh ash-tray near the Englishman.

"*Scusi, Signorino* does not remember the Trinacria last April!"

"Why, hello!" Dentwater greeted him. "It's *you*, is it? Why, of course I remember it. How are things going with you, Francesco?"

"They are going well," the other said simply.

"I am glad of that," Dentwater nodded to him affably. "You have been in America?"

Francesco told him yes and was returning home.

"Then you are not a regular man on this boat?"

Francesco told his friend that he was working his passage back.

"Why, did n't you have any luck in the States?" Dentwater asked.

"I travelled much. I went from Nuovo Yorke to Santa Francesco. I visited many towns and many cities."

"What were you doing?" Dentwater asked hypocritically.

"I was looking for a friend, *Signorino*."

"Did you find him?"

"No, *Signorino*, I learned that they had returned to Messina."

"Your friend was a woman, I suppose?"

"*Signorino*," returned the other gently, "the most beautiful woman on the coast of Sicily."

And Dentwater at the tone smiled at the lover as at a brother. "Barring one," he said with sudden fraternity; "barring one."

"*Ecco*," the Sicilian gravely agreed, and continued: "I had heard terrible lies of her at home, *Signorino*, and I went to see and to fetch her back. I found out how hard she had worked; how cold it is; how hot it is; how much money is needed to be well there; and the lies——"

And the American reminded him: "Why, *were* they lies, then?"

With a shrug of his shoulders and the lifting of his head in a way Dentwater thought majestic, Francesco replied:

"I did not ask about them. I did not ask."

"I expect you were right there."

And the other went on eagerly: "Oh, is n't it so, *Signorino*? One does not bother about *lies*—they are not *real*."

"Quite so, Francesco."

"And when they told me that *Bastiana* had gone home to Messina, then *naturalmente* I understood that if those things about her had been true, she would never have gone home. So I followed her."

The manner in which he had displayed his hands at this last phrase was not needed to make Dentwater remark them. They were scarred and roughened.

"I have worked my passage over, *Signorino*, and to-morrow we will be in Messina."

Then the waiter placed his scarred hands behind his back and stood quietly by the red-cushioned side of the room, looking out through the window at the sea: gray, wintry, its waves like wolves' mouths fanged with foam.

So near to port, the Englishman the next morning could not rest in his cabin, and at dawn dressed and went up on deck. Lighting a cigarette, he leaned against the rail and gazed out in an effort to see the city which held his heart and all his desire.

The 30th of December was cloudy and overcast. Light did not break with its usual beautiful clarity over Sicily. The blue ravishing atmosphere of dawning day seemed banished forever, and gray clouds hung over the gray sea, into which the coast-line cut black and sharp. Every now and then big drops of rain fell, the brief storms followed by cold, ugly winds. Under the stormy morning, under the black sky, Messina itself was sharply white and trenchant. Stucco and plastered buildings appeared made out of spotless shells strewn all along the beach. Here and there in some window a light still burned—a little, starlike light. A few only of these small lamps shone out into the bluish dark, and over the city full of sleep, from the hillsides down to the sea, silence rung like a living thing.

The hour was so still and the desolation of the place so intense that Dentwater was unaccountably depressed and overwhelmed. He listened almost superstitiously for a sound to come out to him to the sea from the sleeping city. He could not distinguish the Pallazzo of the Contessa Fiori Mille; it was too dark and obscure; and his eyes wandered down to the shores where along the port lay lines of barrels filled with oranges and sea-water, and where along the promenade Messina's palaces lined, dignified and stately.

It grew dreadfully cold. Nothing could be more unlike the kindly, warm, effulgent port he had thought to find than this icy welcome. He turned the collar of his coat up to his ears. This was no southern breeze that came whistling about his head.

A new storm of rain broke afresh and fell so heavily this time that he left the deck and went toward the cabin. Just as he did so he heard a sound from the shore—from the sea—from the heavens—from the very bowels of the earth—from the pit of the ocean, as though the earth and its elements all mingled in one tremendous cry.

The deck rose and fell under his feet. The ship mounted aloft toward the black pall-like skies, lifted up upon the crest of the waves, upon the upheaval of the sea. It rose on the air as though in desire to reach the land. By the creaking of the timber, by the strain at the anchor-chain, Dentwater looked to see his boat capsize or cast itself upon the shore; but the anchor chain snapped and in a second more the ship was released, while the wave which had lifted it up set it free

and went on—on—and on, gaining volume and tremendous size, rising between Dentwater and the shore like a veil of the infernal regions.

He clung to the rail, his face fixed toward Messina—toward the white block of it, toward the sunny square of it; and the whole of it, as he looked with his distended eyes, moved like a scene in a cinematograph: Messina palpitated, reeled, shook, quivered; and from it arose one long, sharp cry—a cry like the composite appeal from thousands of throats, from thousands and thousands of calls upon God. Then—Messina fell: wall upon wall; house upon house; tower upon tower; palace upon palace. The whole mass became a great pile of dust, of terrible destruction, appalling, yawning remains; and the powder and smoke of it, the ashes of what had been home and hearth and altars not a minute before, arose in veils upon the air.

Dentwater felt his limbs give way under him as he looked upon the city which for him as for many held everything in the world. Surrounded by the ship's people, his ears deafened with their cries and clamor, and by the orders which he could hardly distinguish from the appeals to God and to the Virgin, the cries that "*Reggio non e piu*" did not touch him. He did not even look at the other side, where Reggio's fate was that of the larger town. Often before he had heard cries from this golden port when he had come in by boat, cries that came musically out to him at sea; but now from the shores out of which seemed the silence of the shades began to come calls for help, as if from an infernal dream. From the charnel house that Messina was; from the powdery, smoking piles, from the wrecked roofs and the gaping eyes and doors out of which the flames began to rise, there seemed to pour shadowy people; and as he looked the shores were thickly black with refugees. Crying, calling, their voices audible, their imploring hands stretched out to the ships, all that was left of Messina suppliated the sea.

The sight of this stirred him to life, and just then some one grasped him by the arm with a force that nearly made him fall. He was torn from the rail. In his shirt and trousers, Francesco, the waiter, was by his side. His icy face, from which every spark of life had fled, turned itself to Dentwater.

"*Viene*," he said. "*Viene*. A boat is going in. Let us go, too."

A long groan broke from the Englishman; a shudder transfused his body; tears rushed to his eyes, which he thought must be filled with blood and mist. He seized Francesco, actually clung to him, following him to the ship's side. There, after a few words to the superior officers with an authority and power which proved to Dentwater that he still had an arm to raise and feet to stand upon, the two men clambered down into the boat, and, with the captain and first mate and a dozen sailors, they put to shore. Out through a mass of objects which the tidal wave

had fetched out to them as it receded from Messina, came barrels, oranges, fruit, upturned boats, dirt and filth. Already the beach was black with people who had crawled like rats from holes, and the air was wild with cries that Dentwater would hear ring in his ears for the rest of his life: "Jesus!"—"Madonna!"—"Dio, Dio, *pieta de noi!*"—"Spare us!"—"Help us, Mother of God!"

As the little boat made the beach, another terrible shock shook the earth, and the remainder of a line of palaces fell forward almost into the sea. Wild and appalling as the scene was, filled as the air was with death, for Dentwater there was but one fact, one idea: *her* presence in that horror, her destruction. He set his teeth and clenched his hands. Before the boat touched the shore he had leapt out and staggered up the pebble beach, from thence to the terrace and the port.

Before he had gone many steps toward the main street, where the lamps lay up in the earth, Francesco's hand seized him again by the arm.

"Will you come with me to find 'Bastiana?"

Dentwater turned on him a face that was hardly human. "I am going to the hills to find a woman of my own. Let me free."

He might as well have tried to shake off the earthquake itself. The hand upon him was like fate.

"'Bastiana will be easy to find, she is so beautiful. You will know her at once." And he dragged the other on.

Dentwater had his pistol in his hip-pocket. He drew it, and without hesitation put it at Francesco's head.

With a scream the other let go his hold of Dentwater's arm. "*Dio, Dio!* You will kill me now when there are so few living men!" And he fled like a wild man into the heart of Messina—into the muffled cries and calls more like sounds from Purgatory and Hell than from anything on earth. Dentwater, after glancing desperately at the ruins before him, began to run toward the left, where on the outskirts he thought he could thread his way to the hills.

He was surrounded by the people—women in night-clothes; women half-naked, covered by men's coats; many children, and a hundred arms outstretched to him. "Aid for the love of God!"—"Are you a doctor? My arm is broken."—"Give me aid, for the love of Christ!"—"My children are all buried there. Come!"

The young man shook them off brutally. He himself half-mad, he fled to the mound of ruins—toward the horror and the honeycombs and the hecatombs that held more than one hundred thousand dead and buried alive. Everything assailed him and obstructed him and held him back. The débris was so high that he had to climb through it and around it. The dead and the dying were everywhere. The wounded cried to him. Three or four times he stopped at the risk of his life

under the walls of a tottering ruin, whilst the dislodged stones came crashing down.

Passing one gaping house, above the cries and supplications he heard the sob of a child. He went on, however. "Somebody else will find it," he thought stubbornly, "and I must go on." But the sound beat in his ears and clamored in his heart. He had turned a corner, yet he could not lose it. When the sobs ceased to be audible, he retraced his steps in agony, and found the house too readily, led by the cries of the child. The entire front had fallen out into the street, and thus dismantled rooms were exposed with shameless effrontery to the world. He thought that by climbing a pile of crumbling stucco he could make the casement, and did so, stepping over a man and a woman, dead, and so managed to crawl into the room from whence the crying sounded. On an iron bed under the fallen ceiling lay those who could have silenced the child's cries. Close by in its crib, unharmed, convulsed with tears and grief, a dark-eyed child stood up, naked. Dentwater, well-nigh cursing it for the delay it meant, took it in his arms and crawled back, the child stifling his sobs and tears against his savior's neck.

"An hour lost out of her life," he muttered, and then came the prayer: "Grant some one may have turned to her as I have turned here."

A woman caught at him as he passed. "For the love of God, come with me! My children——"

Dentwater cried to her, "Take this one," and thrust the child upon her. "It has no one. They are all dead. For the love of God, let me go! I go to my own." He pushed brutally on, turning from the cries and the supplications, with joy on finding himself free, until he reached the outlet of the street which he knew he must take in order to reach the part of Messina he sought.

Great heavens, the street was impassable! Into it, across it, on both sides of it, the houses had fallen into a mass, from which smoke and dirt and cries arose. The mass was full of dead and wounded and dying. All around him were weeping people. Every now and then the earth shook under their feet. The ruins rocked, and that fell which had not yet fallen. Each tremor was followed by prayers and lamentations, and upon these wrecked buildings and dishevelled beings the rain poured with cruel consistency, mingling with mud and dirt and blood. Dentwater, black with despair, stared at the obstruction through which it would take him three hours to retrace his dreadful way.

He had landed at Messina a little before five. It was now four o'clock in the afternoon. His excitement and labor had kept him from conscious hunger and fatigue. The people blessed him as he went, and

a group of men joined him and worked under his orders. But towards five, as he lifted his eyes from digging out a buried creature, and saw his companions raise a woman into the air and life, he grew faint and his head reeled. The horrors he had seen, the human carnage, sickened him. He put his hand to his head and leaned against what seemed to be a solid wall.

They had now reached the end of the street down which Dentwater had come like a messenger of life. It had ceased to rain and hail. As he gave himself breathing space, his thoughts went back to the object of his search, and the fact that he had been kept from the hills by a power stronger than himself.

"I have been mad," he murmured. "Mad! Why have I delayed?"

He stirred, and discovered he was too faint to move—not astonishing, as he had been working without respite for nearly twelve hours. And just then, coming up the ruined street, he saw in a group of people about whom the crowd gathered some one distributing bread and food. A few soldiers, scarcely dressed but still with somewhat of military dignity, kept off the famished folk with their drawn swords. "*Patienza! Patienza!*"

In the centre of the escort was a woman—the one presentable human being, the one creature in this dreadful place dressed with pretense of decency. She wore a short linen skirt, a short jacket, a little *beret* on her head. Around her neck by a cord was suspended a huge basket filled with bread, which she distributed with her own hands. Three other women, evidently her servants, loaded down in the same way, walked behind her.

Pressed against the wall, Dentwater stared at the woman as a man brought back to life might gaze upon a familiar face. She called out cheerily to the stricken people as she came, and her presence in that sea of disaster was benignant. Near her a stretcher blocked her way. A man lay on it, his head swathed in crimson rags. The lady blanched as they brought the man close to her, and, bending down, she put drink to the man's lips, speaking to the creature with a life and spirit and courage that cheered and helped every one who heard her voice. The dreadfully wounded man murmured a blessing. As she lifted herself up, they swung her basket around her neck, and she started on.

Then Dentwater stalked forward as a man might walk just free from a sepulchre. There was blood on his face, where a falling stone had grazed him, nearly taking his life. He was covered with dust and mud, with blood and rain and stucco and dirt, and his hands were bruised where he had lifted stones and turned away obstacles from buried life. Crossing the lady's path, he stood before her and held out both his hands:

"*Madonna*, will you give me some of your bread?"

The lady cried out; but Dentwater's eyes, staring from his ashen face, cautioned her.

"Don't—don't! It's a time for those who have struggled out alive from this horror to be still. Give me to eat, *Madonna*, and to drink, if you have anything to spare."

Dentwater was a guest under the only roofed dwelling left standing in that part of Sicily. The house of the Contessa di Fiori Mille remained almost intact, though walls were cracked and seamed, and there was not a window-pane through which to look down upon Messina. The terrace from which one saw the port and the ships was strewn with fallen columns and masses of broken piles and earthen jars. The villa, having still its roof and its own walls, had become a hospital filled with those of the wounded who would let themselves be cared for here. There was a strong prejudice among the survivors against any roof or any walls, and in their fitful slumbers, in their waking dreams, the victims cried: "For the love of God, save us! The earthquake—the earthquake! *Il terraimoto*."

Ah, the earthquake indeed!

She was dressed for her mission in a rough dark dress, covered by a linen apron which came up over her bosom, a great red cross shining in the middle. Under a small dark cap, the sun and glory of her hair made what had been the only light for Dentwater during many days. But her face was what he loved best to look upon. There was compassion there, and tenderness; but, more than all, there was glory and uplift, and he recalled that twenty times a day, during their work among the sufferers, there had been an indescribable comfort in her presence to them all. The Queen had shuddered and wept the first day she returned to her ship, but Bianca di Fiori Mille had gone on through all.

During the days in which Dentwater had worked in Messina he had not seen Francesco. The man had scarcely crossed his mind. But on this morning, picking his way among the fallen débris, he heard a voice crying to him, "*Signorino!*" and a man whose nervous grasp he remembered seized his arm. It took a second for Dentwater to recognize Francesco, stained with dirt and blood and sweat. There were tears too on that face, through which the vast dark eyes looked fixedly. Francesco was a skeleton, emaciated by horror and despair.

"*Signorino! Signorino!*"

With infinite pity, Dentwater murmured:

"My good Francesco!"

"*Signorino*"—the man's voice was a husky whisper—"Bastiana—she is *there!*"

"Mother of God! Where, Francesco?"

"Under these ruins. Under these walls. This was her cousin's house. This was Ciccio Ferri's. This was his wine-shop. That is what it *was*; *this*," moaned the man, "*is what it is!* But 'Bastiana is there. Come!"

Francesco, who fell on his knees and continued with his hands what had evidently been a work of continued systematic intent, simply glanced up at Dentwater and continued: "Help! Help! The sailors have been with me all day; *they* are exhausted, but I am not even tired. The family are all dead, but 'Bastiana is alive!"

"How do you know, my poor fellow?"

"Know?" the Italian repeated. "Why, I hear her voice. She calls me night and day."

Dentwater thought it a futile effort to clear away the ruins of houses with naked hands.

"She has talked to me in these days and nights," continued Francesco. "She has told me much, *Signorino*. She is good; she is a saint: she is always praying now that we might save her. And she is the most beautiful——"

To the lady who came up to their side, Dentwater said:

"*Madonna*, this is the waiter of the Trinacria, of whom I spoke to you months ago. Under these ruins, he tells me, his 'Bastiana is buried."

Francesco staggered up and, lifting a weight of brick, threw it down into the street.

"*Si, si*," he nodded to the Contessa; "'Bastiana is the most beautiful woman in Italy, and she is down there, alive."

Dentwater shook his head. "Poor devil, poor devil!"

But the Contessa, impressed by the Italian's faith, asked the same question Dentwater had asked:

"How do you know she is alive?"

"Why should she die?"

And the lady murmured: "Why, indeed?"

"She is good and beautiful, and she calls me night and day."

"Why in Heaven's name do you work alone like this? Help him, Richard. I will go and get some men."

"Get the sailors, *Madonna*." Francesco used the title Dentwater had conferred upon the lady. "Get the sailors, *Madonna*, they are kind and very strong."

"If she is not crushed to death," Dentwater said to him cruelly, "'Bastiana will be starved. She has been there five days."

"She is at prayers," Francesco repeated calmly. "She is praying for light. Courage, *Signorino*, courage."

And impressed and touched, Dentwater set himself to his task.

Ah, melancholy house of Ciccio Ferri, dealer in small fruits and the sharp sour wines in basket bottles! Ferri, the good neighbor and good merchant, had felt his house fall in one sole chaotic sweep and bury under its walls and ruins his entire family. 'Bastiana, on a visit to her cousin, occupied a small room at the back, completely blocked in, buried by the falling material and by the houses next.

The Contessa at the noon hour, when he stopped for a moment, brought him food.

"Be as hopeful as you can, Richard. Who knows how much of our thoughts goes down to her in her tomb."

Dentwater shrugged. "If she were alive, *Madonna!*"

And the Contessa replied: "*She is alive!*"

They worked with torches at night, and the spluttering flare lit fantastically the dreadful place. At this hour it was not difficult to believe Messina unreal, for it was like a dreadful inferno, horrible with the cries of animals—of hungry dogs; cries of cats for prey, or of maddened animals driven from their meat—the stench and odor, the smell of fire and the scent of blood.

The Contessa di Fiori Mille returned at night to the villa, at Dentwater's insistent command. For night-work a tent had been put up by the officers of the American ships, and towards ten o'clock, too exhausted to lift his arm for another effort, Dentwater went in to rest. He had taken Francesco forcibly from his work, threatening him that they would all desert if he did not take some repose. His face was thinner than ever, and the look in his eyes made one afraid.

Dentwater fell into a heavy slumber, but he had hardly slept when awakened by Francesco, whom he saw bending over him. It was dawn.

"*Signorino, Signorino,*" he whispered, "come at once, for the love of God! 'Bastiana has called me three times. She begs us to hurry. Come, for the love of God!"

"My good fellow!" Dentwater cried. But the other dragged him bodily from the bed and lifted him upon his feet.

"*Signorino,*" he said, "you and I together, you and I together." But Dentwater demurred:

"We are not equal to what there is to do."

To shame him, the Russian sailors who had turned in not four hours before, blonde and strong and willing, their picks in their hands, waited without the tent. Francesco had routed them out, and without parley the little band followed the enthusiast, the fanatic, the lover, through the stench and the inferno of the streets, through the silence broken by the howling of dogs, cries of help from inaccessible ruins, cries of wretches caught and held between imprisoning walls. Shots of the soldiers, as they hunted down some thief who did not scruple to rob the dreadful dead, came sharp and significant across the night.

At the ruins, as they had left them, were their extinguished torches stuck in the débris. Between them and the back of Ferri's house there now rose a single wall of ruin, in order to pierce which the mass had to be cut into with great skill and precaution.

When they had begun to excavate, the skies were scarcely light. The stars still shone, and one by one all went out as morning broke in beauty over stricken Messina. The cry of the watch, the change of the guard, the tapping of a drum, the report of a cannon from the port, the salute of a band of sailors as they passed ready to similar occupations, greeted the day. It was nine o'clock when Dentwater threw down his pick and stretched his arms in supplication for relief. Francesco's renewed faith, his determination, infused them; the obstruction was so thin that every now and then a handful of stucco tumbled in to the other side and disappeared.

Francesco put his face down and called: "'Bastiana, *corragio!*" Otherwise, no one spoke.

At nine o'clock the Contessa brought them coffee and food. Dentwater's appearance might have startled a less brave woman, but she did not urge him to desist or even to rest. She seemed rather to approve his martyrdom, and to each one of the blonde marines she gave a word of praise.

Towards noon Francesco, who, aided by the sailors, had dislodged and carried away a last bit of wall, crouched down and with ferret-like motion of his hands pushed the plaster, made a hole, and peered through it; then called: "'Bastiana, 'Bastiana! *Corragio, e me!*"

When they had made ingress possible, they let Francesco down, and stood above him, waiting, peering to see. The room was intact. The hot, close air, in which it was inconceivable even a brute could subsist for seven days, rushed to them. An iron bed, a chair, a coarse toilet-set, comprised the furniture. Over in a corner was the shrine of the Virgin. The red lamp before it still burned low in the oil. Before the shrine, stretched on the floor, her hands on her breast, lay 'Bastiana. They saw Francesco lift her and carry her toward them: he handed her up to them into the light.

The beautiful creature, across whose breast was folded a little black shawl, lay on a bed made for her out of marine jackets; her head was on the knee of the Contessa di Fiori Mille.

"She is dead," Dentwater and the sailors said in their language.

Falling by her side, Francesco gazed upon the face of "the most beautiful woman in all Sicily." With his scarred hands, cut, bruised, and bleeding, he touched her hands. "Bastiana, courage, it is I—Francesco."

The lids of the girl's eyes did not quiver.

"But she is alive," Francesco said to the Contessa.

"Tell her so, Francesco."

Leaning close to his sweetheart's lips, Francesco in a voice which might have infused a mummy with vitality whispered:

"Speak, speak! You are alive, 'Bastiana, you are alive!"

"Give her wine!" Dentwater commanded; he had bent down and was trying to hold a glass to the girl's icy lips.

'Bastiana opened her eyes. They were as dark as the shades of the earth from which the shock had come. She raised herself up and with an instinct of modesty gathered the shawl across her breast; she drew her bare feet under the sailors' coats.

"Ciccio, Ciccio!" she cried. "You heard me! I called, I called, I called!"

She opened her arms wide with a gesture as grave as it was divine. With a sob in which his agony of weeks and months went forth and died, the lover gathered 'Bastiana against his faithful heart.

Dentwater stood by the side of the Contessa di Fiori Mille on the terrace of her dismantled villa, where the ruins were strewn about. They were ready to leave Messina. Not until the last worker had been sent away, not until the city could spare them, would the Contessa consent to depart.

Francesco and 'Bastiana waited on the hillside, to bid their friends good-by. The Contessa kissed 'Bastiana on both cheeks.

"You are really going to stay, 'Bastiana?"

And Francesco said: "Yes, *Excellenza*, we are going to stay. We have permission. We will build a new home when the Americans build a new city."

"I should think," Dentwater said to him, "that you have had enough of Sicily, Francesco."

"Why?" asked the Italian innocently. "It is a garden."

The Contessa smiled at Dentwater's expression.

"We are not afraid of earthquakes," continued 'Bastiana peacefully. "There was an earthquake in America when I was there. I am more afraid of America." And she glanced at Dentwater as though she thought they might understand. With a pretty gesture, she said:

"The earthquake did no harm to Francesco and me, though my poor, poor family——!"

And Dentwater bade the two good-by, and the figures of these survivors in a ruined city were the last he saw as he turned the road to go out of Messina with his lady by his side.



SANCTUARY

By John Fleming Wilson

D R. SLOANE, surgeon of the big steamship *Chiyo Maru*, is an amateur of psychology. We were discussing what he called Static Telepathy—an example of his hideous facility in thorny language. By it he intended, he said, to describe delicately certain phenomena he alone, of all men, had observed and studied.

"Nowadays we usually consider life as a form of motion," Sloane remarked, laying before me a cheap magazine print of a furbelowed actress. "Telepathy is understood always to mean a more or less transient stream of communication without physical means. But that document—a remarkable affair—represents what was not a flashing of thought across the world, but a pool of quiescent—well, telepathy. I call it static telepathy."

"I am still at a loss to understand the phrase," I said.

"It's a makeshift," he admitted, taking up the half-tone engraving and looking at it. "But I intended to express by it the same thing which would happen, say, if you cork a bottle of perfume."

For five minutes the Doctor deluged me with abstractions. I brought him back to the piece of paper in his hand. "Quit befogging me," I insisted. "What did you say about the picture?"

"I'll give you the facts in the case," was the response. "You can figure out the theory for yourself."

"Several years ago I was surgeon of a steamship called the *Braemar*, trading to the Far East. A member of its crew is my first in this charade—big Tom Sullivan. He was an ugly customer, a bully, ferociously powerful, and subject to incredible paroxysms of rage. I myself, having occasion one night to chloroform him so that his shipmates could handle his gorilla-like strength, diagnosed his malady—for malady it certainly was—as due to some obscure brain-lesion. After each fit the fellow would fall into a kind of stupor from which he roused slowly.

"I asked the chief engineer one day why he kept Sullivan at work.

"'He's the best man in my fire-room,' was the answer. 'He's worth half a dozen of the others. You may not believe it, but he displays intelligence as well as bull strength.'"

"The chief engineer never allowed personal equations to interfere with the perfect working of his machinery. He would have hired Satan himself if that gentleman had offered his services and shown ability.

"I became interested in Sullivan's case, watched him carefully for many months, and actually picked up a sort of acquaintance with him. I think that beneath his fierce taciturnity the fellow concealed a sense of his abnormality. At any rate, he told me something of his history: he was Liverpool Irish, an uneducated orphan, and without any moral feeling, so far as I could see. He was as close to the beast as a human being may get—a dangerous creature!

"One night I was making inspection with the captain and the chief steward. While we were going down the main-deck alleyway, where the firemen lived, we heard a groan. We found in a dark bunk a man who had been horribly mauled. Inquiry developed that Sullivan had run amuck again and thumped his room-mate, Murphy. I doctored up the injured man, and the skipper sent for the chief engineer.

"'What are you going to do about this, Chief?' he demanded.

"The chief was quite indignant, being proud of the way he could manage his men. He sent for Sullivan, who was on the watch. The fellow came up, a slouchy, long-armed, furry-chested brute, his black hair filled with luminous coal-dust, his great brows running straight across under his white forehead, his eyes small, glinting, treacherous.

"'What do you mean by beating Murphy up this way?' the chief demanded in a rage.

"An articulate grunt was the only response. It took five minutes to elicit the fact that Murphy had insulted Sullivan.

"'Pretty days when firemen think they can be insulted!' murmured the captain.

"I thought I detected an odd, human embarrassment beneath the man's defiant demeanor. I ventured a question myself. I shall never forget the hoarse bellow that rumbled from the Irishman's lips.

"'He insulted the gir-rl,' were the astonishing words.

"'What girl?' came the staccato tones of the skipper.

"Sullivan glowered at us all. I touched the captain on the arm.

"I think I can handle him, sir,' I said.

"'I wish you would,' said the skipper, and the chief nodded assent.

"So I took Sullivan into the little room that he shared with Murphy, made him sit down, and peremptorily demanded an explanation. 'What girl are you talking about?' I inquired.

"Sullivan stared at me a moment, and I swear a blush reddened his cheeks. He raised an enormous and sooty paw and pointed to the bulkhead. Under the little oil light I saw the piece of paper which you hold in your hand. You observe that it purports to be the portrait of Vesta Dalziel, a soubrette in a comic-opera company.

"I examined the rather crude engraving at some length, trying to figure out by what astonishing perplexity of circumstances the grimy animal beside me could ever have met or known or become the champion of a beruffled theatrical beauty. Finally I turned to Sullivan. 'You say Murphy insulted her?' I demanded. 'Where is she?—a passenger on this ship?'

"The great muscles hardened under his smooth skin. I thought the man would go into another paroxysm. He managed to say hoarsely, 'He called her a name!'

" 'Is she on this ship?' I persisted.

"She was not. I shan't go into too many details. I'll merely make a coherent account of Sullivan's mutterings and admissions.

"While thumbing over an old magazine, he had been attracted by this picture. He cut it out and tacked it to the wall in his room. Murphy came in and referred unthinkingly to her—by her, I mean the picture—in uncomplimentary terms. He almost met death at the hands of his outraged room-mate.

"Make what you can out of that. Those are the facts—portentous facts to the main deck of the *Braemar*, for no man thereafter was ever to venture to use an evil word or foul expression in Sullivan's room. The big fireman protected the purity of Vesta Dalziel—again I refer to the picture—as though she were in the life and had taken sanctuary within the compass of his great strength.

"At sea we take matters more at their face value than we do on shore. Nobody sneered at this peculiar turn in Sullivan's mood. There was n't a member of the *Braemar's* crew who would have ventured to state that the fire-room bully did n't mean honestly what he said when he let it be known publicly that disregard of the tender sensibilities of Vesta Dalziel would be personally avenged. I think that that portrait was on Sullivan's wall for over a year. During that period we observed a change in Sullivan himself.

Imperceptibly yet actually, he became more human. That mental twist which had resulted in black rages was ameliorated. He kept himself freer and freer of the rough pleasures of the ports we stopped at. He saved his money, and at last even clothed his huge frame with much attention to what he probably considered style. He indulged in hats of preposterous elegance, and one day I had difficulty in keeping a straight face when I met him on the Bund in Shanghai, wearing enormous yellow gloves. I am trying to make you understand that that paper there, with that foolish engraving on it, was an absolute person to Sullivan. The end of this peculiar romance is an illustration of my phrase, 'Static Telepathy.'

"On a return voyage from Japan we were burning a very inferior native coal. Trouble was rife in the fire-room. Tempers grew short,

and one blowy night the whole thing ended in mutiny. The chief engineer openly sympathized with his men. He told the captain that no crew on earth could handle such trash as filled the *Braemar's* bunkers.

"Just go down and have a look-see at the fires," the chief insisted.

"I don't care anything about fires," retorted the skipper, righteously angry because his ship lay helpless on the eve of a gale.

"I tell you the man does n't live who can keep those fires clean," the engineer persisted. "We've done everything we can. The boys have worked themselves to the last ounce, and I, for one, am not going to take severe measures."

"The old man was at last impressed by the chief's language, and we went below for an examination. Five minutes was plenty to prove that we were in great peril. Every furnace—we had sixteen fires—was filled with a rock-like mass of clinker. It was exactly as if the coal did n't burn, but melted and flowed down over the bars and settled into rapidly cooling slag, which could n't be broken up or handled in any way. And the half-consumed gases flickered out and filled the fire-room with stench.

"What's to be done, Chief?" the captain inquired anxiously, while the sweating firemen rammed the ponderous slice-bars into the darkening furnaces.

"There's only one thing," was the response, "and that's to let the fires cool and chop the clinker out. Then we'll get up steam afresh."

"A long job!" muttered the skipper.

"The chief engineer smiled malevolently. 'A long job! But we down here will do it. And, even with our best efforts, we will be half dead before we're half way through. What do you expect when a ship's bunkers are filled with such filth? Save money? Pah!'

"Do your best," was the curt response to this outburst. "It's going to blow before morning."

"All night the *Braemar* tumbled in the trough of a steadily rising sea. Morning broke, as it does in northern latitudes, slowly and drearily. One glance at the gray water and lowering sky was enough for most of our passengers, but of course they did n't realize the seriousness of our plight. The skipper was half sick with worry, but managed a smile in the saloon.

"At three that afternoon the chief reported four fires cleaned and enough steam to give us headway. It would take twelve hours more to clean the grates. The captain made the single remark, 'In twelve hours we won't need any engines. It will be too late.'

"The chief shook his head and returned to the engines, and I, after joking with some passengers, went below myself. I quickly saw that of all men at work more than half were absolutely inefficient from exhaustion. Some of them could barely raise the weight of the heavy slice-

bars for each stroke against the clinker. They were toiling, you understand, in an intense and noisome heat, breathing the foul gases from the smouldering coal. While I stood there on the plates, feeling the enormous heave and thrust of the under-running seas, I realized with sinking heart that we were indeed in a bad way. I went over to Sullivan, who alone of all the firemen seemed unimpaired in strength. 'A great deal depends on you,' I remarked.

"He brushed the perspiration from his eyes and gave me a sharp glance. 'I'll help you boys keep your strength up,' I went on. He shook his head, as much as to say that he needed nothing, that he was strong enough for any task.

"Later, by the captain's orders, I took my permanent station in the fire-room. Man after man was choking and fainting in the hideously hot furnace, to be dragged roughly out, hastily restored, and harshly driven back to work. Steadily the percentage of those able even to move their limbs became smaller. At midnight the captain reinforced the fire-room crew by a large detachment of sailors. But the new-comers were of little use, being unaccustomed to the heat and the confined space. At last, with six fires clean and the propeller turning enough to hold the *Braemar* on her course, the working force was reduced to Sullivan and Murphy. The chief engineer made one remark as he directed his assistants in keeping the fires going: 'We've got to keep the engines turning. Depend on Sullivan.' His bleak eyes sought the fireman's, and the bully nodded back sullenly.

"He saved the ship. At last we dragged him out of a furnace, inert and dying. I used all my skill to no avail. Nothing but the man's enormous vitality had enabled him to withstand so long the poison of the gases and the terrific heat. I managed to restore him to consciousness for a short period.

"'You're dying, Sullivan,' I said. 'Is there anything you want?'

"He lifted his great seared hands and croaked through his burned lips, 'Give me the picture.'

"I took it down from the wall and held the smoky oil-lamp close while he gazed at it.

"Foolishly I made the remark, 'I'll tell her you died to save the ship, Sullivan.'

"From cracked lips came the halting confession. As I have told you, he had picked up a magazine, idly turned the pages, and been struck by something in the pretty face. 'It did n't seem right, sir,' he muttered, 'that she should be hearin' all our rough talk. The firemen's mess-room ain't no place for a lady. I ain't never known any good women, sir. I ain't never spoken to one. But I know one when I see her, and '—his great arms relaxed for the last time—'I looked after her the best I could.'

"I took the picture to my room. There it lies before you.

"I confess to such a curiosity that, when I had opportunity, I made some inquiries about Vesta Dalziel. Discovering that she was no longer in the public's favor, I went further. I spent some money to make her fate sure. But she had departed into that obscurity which cloaks many a fallen theatrical star.

"Oh, yes, I finally found her, in San Francisco, singing in a café and subsisting on the coins which hilarious diners tossed to her feet. No longer pretty, emaciated and in the last stages of consumption, she was a travesty. When she had sung her last song in a cracked voice, I met her in the proprietor's office. He told me that he kept her at work merely for charity's sake.

"The woman's got neither looks nor voice," he said frankly. "But she's a good kid. And what can a fellow do?"

"Well," I told him in explanation of my visit, "a man whom I know very well, and to whom I owe something, thought a good deal of her. I feel under obligations to see that she is looked after."

"Oh, that's all right," he said when I had suggested my plan. "I'll be glad to let her go. If she's got any friends that can put up for a doctor and a hospital, I'll chip in myself."

"When I spoke to Miss Dalziel herself about the 'friend,' she stared at me in amazement. 'Me?' she exclaimed. 'I never had any friend.'"

"That's right," said the proprietor of the café. "I've known the lady for years, and she's always been straight as a string."

"The weary, desolate woman nodded her head pathetically. Then she laughed, half-bitterly. 'Straight? Sure! And a lot of good it did me!'

"It's done one good thing for you," I assured her. "You are going to be looked after now."

"I took her to an open-air sanatorium in the Berkeley hills, placing her there with enough money to pay her expenses for a couple of months, the owner of the café insisting on coming in with a noble share. Vesta Dalziel was worried. 'I've always found that a girl has to settle up some time,' she remonstrated. 'I can still work, and I ain't the other sort. See?'

"Pooh and three tuts, little girl," I said. "Your friend won't ever bother you."

"I went to sea, and came back to find out that Vesta Dalziel had reached the end. The sanatorium director thought she might survive a couple of days. 'But you'd best hurry,' he concluded.

"I went out and found her sitting in a long chair, staring out over the waters of the bay.

"I'm all in, Doc," she told me listlessly, "but I want to know who the fellow is that's putting up for this."

"'Name of Sullivan—Tom Sullivan,' I told her.

"She shook her head. 'I never knew him.' Later she laid a claw-like hand on mine and whispered huskily, 'I always hoped to be married, Doc. I did n't really belong in the theatrical business. I was brought up better than to be in the chorus. I've seen tough times, but I always kept up, because I said, "Some day a six-footer will want you and look after you and marry you." I never found him, though I dreamed of him.' She looked abroad at the blue sky. 'He was big and ugly, and so strong,' she continued slowly. 'He never would stand for bad language around me. But I never met him.' She sighed.

"'He is waiting for you,' I told her, and when I caught the sudden expression of happiness that shone in her eyes as she died, I felt that I was right. Scientifically, it can't be proved. I have n't been able to do more than formulate an hypothesis that Thomas Sullivan gave sanctuary to a woman who needed his strength thousands of miles away."

The Doctor fell silent, staring at the picture.

THE LANDLORD'S DAUGHTER

A FRUSTRATED ROMANCE

By John Kendrick Bangs

I MET her first down by the sea—the Landlord's lovely daughter, she; the fairest maid along the shore, 'mid other beauteous maids galore. Her eyes were bright, her eyes were blue, her smile was sweet, and good, and true; her cheeks were tanned, but in their wealth suggested an abundant health.

I sought her here, I sought her there. I followed her 'most everywhere, and finally one soft June night I met her in the pale moonlight. Ecstatic, thrilled in soul and heart, I wooed her from the very start, and ere the stars had ceased to shine had begged her say she would be mine.

A solemn look came in her eye, and then she made me this reply:

"I do not know if I can say right off the handle if I may. I do not know exactly what engagements are already got, but if perchance you still persist, I'll gladly put you on the list. I have a notion that I'm free from July ten to August three, with possibly a day or two, besides, before the season's through, when I'll be yours with pleasure great—that is, upon the usual rate. I charge ten dollars, cash, per day for serving as a fiancée."

And ere the silver moon went down I turned and beat it back to town.

THE POET OF THE NIGHT

By La Salle Corbell Pickett

"I AM a Virginian; at least, I call myself one, for I have resided all my life until within the last few years in Richmond."

Thus Edgar A. Poe wrote to a friend. The fact of his birth in Boston he regarded as merely an unfortunate accident, or perhaps the work of that malevolent "Imp of the Perverse" which apparently dominated his life. That it constituted any tie between him and the "Hub of the Universe," unless it might be the inverted tie of opposition, he never admitted. The love which his charming little actress mother cherished for the city in which she had enjoyed her greatest triumphs seemed to have turned to hatred in the heart of her brilliant and erratic son. In his short and disastrous sojourn in Boston, when his fortunes were at their lowest ebb, it is not likely that his thought once turned to the old house on Haskins, now Carver, Street, where his ill-starred life began.

The reason given by Poe, "I have resided there all my life until within the last few years," suggests but slight cause for his love of Richmond, the home of his childhood, the darkening clouds of which, viewed through the softening lens of years, may have shaded off to brighter tints, as the roughness of a landscape disappears and melts into mystic, dreamy beauty as we journey far from the scene.

The three women who had been the stars in the troubled sky of his youth irradiated his memory of the Queen City of the South. In the churchyard of historic old Saint John's, that once echoed to the words of Patrick Henry, "Give me liberty or give me death!" Poe's mother lay in an unidentified grave. In Hollywood slept his second mother, who had surrounded his boyhood with the maternal affection that, like an unopened rose in her heart, had awaited the coming of the little child who was to be the sunbeam to develop it into perfect flowering. On Shockoe Hill was the tomb of "Helen," his chum's mother, whose beauty of face and heart brought the boyish soul

To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Through the three-fold sanctification of the twin priestesses, Love and Sorrow, Richmond was his home.

So Virginia claims her poet son, the tragedy of whose life is a gloomy, though brilliant, page in the history of American literature.

There are varying stories told of Poe's Richmond home. The impression that he was the inmate of a stately mansion, where he was trained to extravagance which wrought disaster in later years, is not borne out by the evidence. When the loving heart and persistent will of Mrs. Allan opened her husband's reluctant door to the orphaned son of the unfortunate players, that door led into the second story of the building at the corner of Fourteenth Street and Tobacco Alley, in which Messrs. Ellis & Allan earned a comfortable, but not luxurious, living by the sale of the commodity which gave the alley its name. As it was customary in those days for merchants to live in the same building with their business, the fact that he did so does not argue that Mr. Allan was "down on his luck," but neither does it presuppose that he was the possessor of wealth. It was, however, a home in the truest sense for little Edgar, for it was radiant with the love of the tender-hearted woman who had brought him within its friendly walls.

From this home Mr. Allan went to London to establish a branch of the Company business. He was accompanied by Mrs. Allan and Edgar, and the boy was placed in the school of Stöke-Newington, shadowy with the dim procession of the ages and gloomed over by the memory of Eugene Aram. The pictured face of the head of the Manor School, Dr. Bransby, indicates that the hapless boys under his care had stronger than historic reasons for depression in that ancient institution.

England was thrilling with the triumph of Waterloo, and even Stoke-Newington must have awakened to the pulsing of the atmosphere. Not far away were Byron, Shelley, and Keats, at the beginning of their brief and brilliant careers, the glory and the tragedy of which may have thrown a prophetic shadow over the American boy who was to travel a yet darker path than any of these.

Under the elms that bordered the old Roman road, forms of antique romance would lie in wait for the dreamy lad, joining him in his Saturday afternoon walks and telling him stories of their youth in the ancient days to mingle with the wonderful age-youth in the heart of the dual-souled boy. The green lanes were haunted by memories of broken-hearted lovers: Earl Percy, mourning for the fair and fickle Anne; Essex, calling vainly for the royal ring that was to have saved him; Leicester, the Lucky, a more contented ghost, returning in pleasing reminiscence to the scenes of his earthly triumphs, comfortably oblivious of his earthly crimes. What boy would not have found inspiration in gazing at the massive walls, locked and barred against him though they were, within which the immortal Robinson Crusoe sprang into being and found that island of enchantment, the favorite resort of the juvenile imagination in all the generations since?

At Stoke-Newington the introspective boy found little to win him from that self-analysis which later enabled him to mystify a world that rarely pauses to take heed of the ancient exhortation, "Know thyself." In the depths of his own being he found the story of "William Wilson," with its atmosphere of weird romance and its heart of solemn truth.

Incidentally, he uplifted the reputation of the American boy, so far as regarded Stoke-Newington's opinion, by assuring his mates when they marvelled over his athletic triumphs and feats of skill that all the boys in America could do those things.

At the end of the year in which the family returned from Stoke-Newington Mr. Allan moved into a plain little cottage a story and a half high, with five rooms on the ground floor, at the corner of Clay and Fifth Streets. Here they lived until, in 1825, Mr. Allan inherited a considerable amount of money and bought a handsome brick residence at the corner of Main and Fifth Streets, since known as the Allan House. With the exception of two very short intervals, from June of this year until the following February was all the time that Poe spent in the Allan mansion.

The Allan House, in its palmy days, might appeal irresistibly to the mind of a poet, attuned to the harmonies of artistic design and responsive to the beauties of romantic environment. It was a two-story building, with spacious rooms and appointments that suggested the taste of the cultivated mistress of the stately dwelling. On the second floor was "Eddie's room," as she lovingly called it, wherein her affectionate imagination as well as her skill expended themselves lavishly for the pleasure of the son of her heart.

A few years later, upon his sudden return after a long absence, it was his impetuous inquiry of the second Mrs. Allan as to the dismantling of this room that led to his hasty retreat from the house, an incident upon which his early biographers, led by Dr. Griswold, based the fiction that Mr. Allan cherished Poe affectionately in his home until his conduct toward "the young and beautiful wife" forced the expulsion of the young poet from the Allan house. The fact is that Poe saw the second Mrs. Allan only once, for a moment marked by fiery indignation on his part, and on hers by a cold resentment from which the unfortunate visitor fled as from a north wind; the second Mrs. Allan's strong point being a grim and middle-aged determination, rather than "youth and beauty." Not that the thirty calendar years of that lady would necessarily have conducted her across the indefinite boundaries of the uncertain region known as "middle age," but the second Mrs. Allan was born middle-aged, and the almanac had nothing to do with it.

But it was in the sunshine of youth and the warmth of love and the fragrance of newly opening flowers of poetry that Edgar Poe lived

in the new Allan home and from the balcony of the second story looked out upon the varied scenes of the river studded with green islets, the village beyond the water, and far away the verdant slopes and forested hills into the depths of which he looked with rapt eyes, seeing visions which that forest never held for any other gaze. Mayhap, adown those dim green aisles he previsioned the "ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir" with the tomb of Ulalume at the end of the ghostly path through the forest—the road through life that led to the grave where his heart lay buried. Through the telescope on that balcony he may first have followed the wanderings of Al Araaf, the star that shone for him alone. In the dim paths of the moonlit garden flitted before his eyes the dreamful forms that were afterward prisoned in the golden net of his wondrous poesy.

To these poetic scenes he soon bade farewell, and on St. Valentine's day, 1826, entered the University of Virginia, where Number 13, West Range, is still pointed out as the old-time abiding place of Virginia's greatest poet, whose genius has given rise to more acrimonious discussion than has ever gathered about the name of any other man of letters. The real home of Poe at this time was the range of hills known as the Ragged Mountains, for it was among their peaks and glens and caverns and wooded paths and rippling streams that he roamed in search of strange tales and mystic poems that would dazzle his readers in after days. His rambles among the hills of the University town soon came to a close. Mr. Allan, being confronted by a gaming debt which he regarded as too large to fit the sporting necessities of a boy of seventeen, took him from college and put him into the counting-room of Ellis & Allan, a position far from agreeable to one accustomed to counting only poetic feet.

The inevitable rupture soon came, and Poe went to Boston, the city of his physical birth, and destined to become the place of his birth into the tempestuous world of authorship. Forty copies of "Tamerlane and Other Poems" appeared upon the shelf of the printer—and nowhere else. It is said that seventy-three years later a single copy was sold for \$2,250. Had this harvest been reaped by the author in those early days, who can estimate the gain to the field of literature?

Boston proving inhospitable to the firstling of her gifted son's imagination, the Common soon missed the solitary, melancholy figure that had for months haunted the old historic walks. Edgar A. Poe dropped out of the world, or perhaps out of the delusion of fancying himself in the world, and Edgar A. "Perry" appeared, an enlisted soldier in the First Artillery at Fort Independence. For two years "Perry" served his country in the sunlight, and Poe, under night's starry cover, roamed through skyey aisles in the service of the Muse and explored "Al Araaf," the abode of those volcanic souls that rush

in fatal haste to an earthly heaven, for which they recklessly exchange the heaven of the spirit that might have achieved immortality.

A severe illness resulted in the disclosure of the identity of the young soldier, and a message was sent to Mr. Allan, who took him to the Richmond home and helped secure for him an appointment to West Point. On his way to the Academy he stopped in Baltimore and arranged for the publication of a new volume, to contain "Al Araaf," a revised version of "Tamerlane," and some short poems.

Some months later Number 28 South Barracks, West Point, was the despair of the worthy inspector who spent his days and nights in unsuccessful efforts to keep order among the embryo protectors of his country. Poe, the leader of the quartette that made life interesting in Number 28, was destined never to evolve into patriotic completion. He soon reached the limit of the endurance of the officials, that being, in the absence of a pliant guardian, the only method by which a cadet could be freed from the walls of the Academy.

Soon after leaving the military school Poe made a brief visit to Richmond, the final break with Mr. Allan took place, and the poet went to Baltimore.

Number 9 Front Street, Baltimore, is claimed as the birthplace of Poe. There is a house in Norfolk that is likewise so distinguished. There are other places, misty with passing generations, similarly known to history. Poe, though not Homeric in his literary methods, had much the same post-mortem experience as the Father of the Epicists.

At the time of the Poet-wanderer's return to Baltimore, his aunt, Mrs. Clemm, had her humble but neat and comfortable home on Eastern Avenue, then Wilks Street, and here he found the first home he had known since his childhood and, incidentally, his charming child cousin, Virginia, who was to make his home bright with her devotion through the remainder of her brief life.

In these early days no thought of any but a cousinly affection had rippled the smooth surface of Virginia's childish mind, and she was the willing messenger between Poe and his "Mary," who lived but a short distance from the home of the Clemms, and who, when the frosts of years had descended upon her, denied having been engaged to him—apparently because her elders were more discreet than she was—but admitted that she cried when she heard of his death.

In his attic room on Wilks Street he toiled over the poems and tales that some time would bring him fame.

Poe was living in Amity Street when he won the hundred-dollar prize offered by the *Saturday Visitor*, with his "Manuscript Found in a Bottle," and wrote his poem of "The Coliseum," which failed of a prize merely because the plan did not admit of making two awards to the same person. A better reward for his work was an engagement as

assistant editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, which led to his removal to Richmond.

The *Messenger* was in a building at Fifteenth and Main Streets, in the second story of which Mr. White, the editor, and Poe, had their offices. The young assistant soon became sole editor of the publication, and it was in this capacity that he entered upon the critical work which was destined to bring him effective enemies to assail his reputation, both literary and personal, when the grave had intervened to prevent any response to their slanders. Not but that he praised oftener than he blamed, but the thorn of censure pricked deeply, and the rose of praise but gently diffuses its fragrance to be wafted away on the passing breeze. However, the sharp satire attracted attention to the *Messenger*, as attested by the rapid growth of the subscription list.

Here Poe was surrounded by memories of his childhood. The building was next door to that in which Ellis & Allan had their tobacco store in Poe's school-days in Richmond. The old Broad Street Theatre, on the site of which now stands Monumental Church, was the scene of his beautiful mother's last appearance before the public. Near Nineteenth and Main she died in a damp cellar in the "Bird in Hand" district, through which ran Shockoe Creek. Eighteen days later the old theatre was burned, and all Richmond was in mourning for the dead.

At the northwest corner of Fifth and Main Streets, opposite the Allan mansion, was the MacKenzie school for girls, which Rosalie Poe attended in Edgar's school days. He was the only young man who enjoyed the much-desired privilege of being received in that hall of learning, and some of the bright girls of the institution beguiled him into revealing the authorship of the satiric verses, "Don Pompioso," which caused their victim, a wealthy and popular young gentleman of Richmond, to quit the city with undue haste. The verses were the boy's revenge upon "Don Pompioso" for insulting remarks about the position of Poe as the son of stage people.

On Franklin Street, between First and Second, was the Ellis home, where Poe, with Mr. and Mrs. Allan, lived for a time after their return from England. On North Fifth Street, near Clay, still stood the cottage that was the next home of the Allans. At the southeast corner of Eleventh and Broad Streets was the school which Poe had attended, afterward the site of the Powhatan Hotel. Near it was the home of Mrs. Stanard, whose memory comes radiantly down to us in the lines "To Helen."

Ever since the tragedy of the Hellespont, it has been the ambition of poets to perform a noteworthy swimming feat, and one of Poe's schoolboy memories was of his six-mile swim from Ludlam's Wharf to Warwick Bar.

On May 16, 1836, in Mr. Yarrington's boarding-house, at the corner

of Twelfth and Bank Streets, Poe and Virginia Clemm were married. The house was burned in the fire of 1865.

In January, 1837, Poe left the *Messenger* and went north, after which most of his work was done in New York and Philadelphia. "The Fall of the House of Usher" was written when he lived on Sixth Avenue, near Waverley Place, and "The Raven" perched above his chamber door in a house on the Bloomingdale Road, now Eighty-Fourth Street.

When living in Philadelphia Poe went to Washington for the double purpose of securing subscribers for his projected magazine, and of gaining a government appointment. The house in which he stayed during his short and ill-starred sojourn in the Capital is on New York Avenue, upon a terrace with steps to a landing whence a longer flight leads to a side entrance lost in a greenery of dark and heavy bushes. On the opposite side is a small, square veranda. The building, which is two stories and a half high, was apparently a cheerful yellow color in the beginning, but it has become dingy with time and weather. The scars of its long battle with fate give it the appearance of being about to crumble and crash, after the fashion of the "House of Usher." It has windows with gloomy casements, opening even with the ground in the first story, and in the second upon a narrow balcony. A sign on the front of the building invites attention to a popular make of glue.

In 1849, about two years after the passing of the gentle soul of Virginia, Poe returned to Richmond. He went first to the United States Hotel, at the southwest corner of Nineteenth and Main Streets, in the "Bird in Hand" neighborhood, where he had looked for the last time on the face of his young mother. He soon removed to the "Swan," because it was near Duncan Lodge, the home of his friends, the MacKenzies, where his sister Rose had found protection. The Swan was a long, two-storied structure with combed roof, tall chimneys at the ends, and a front piazza with a long flight of steps leading down to the street. It was famous away back in the beginning of the century, having been built about 1795. When it sheltered Poe it wore a look of having stood there from the beginning of time and been forgotten by the passing generations.

Duncan Lodge, now an industrial home, was then a stately mansion, shaded by magnificent trees. Here Poe spent much of his time, and one evening in this friendly home he recited "The Raven" with such artistic effect that his auditors induced him to give it as a public reading at the Exchange Hotel. Unfortunately, it was in midsummer, and both literary Richmond and gay Richmond were at seashore and mountain, and there were few to listen to the poem read as only its author could read it. Later in the same hall he gave, with gratifying success, his lecture on "The Poetic Principle."

In early September, with some friends, he spent a Sunday in the Hygeia Hotel at Old Point. At the request of one of the party he recited "The Raven," "Annabel Lee," and "Ulalume," saying that the last stanza of "Ulalume" might not be intelligible to them, as it was not to him and for that reason had not been published. Even if he had known what it meant, he objected to furnishing it with an explanatory note, quoting Dr. Johnson's remark about a book, that it was "as obscure as an explanatory note."

Miss Susan Ingram, an old friend of Poe, and one of the party at Old Point, tells of a visit he made at her home in Norfolk following the day at Point Comfort. Noting the odor of orris root, he said that he liked it because it recalled to him his boyhood, when his adopted mother kept orris root in her bureau drawers, and whenever they were opened the fragrance would fill the room.

Near old St. John's in Richmond was the home of Mrs. Shelton, who, as Elmira Royster, was the youthful sweetheart from whom Poe took a tender and despairing farewell when he entered the University of Virginia. Here he spent many pleasant evenings, writing to Mrs. Clemm with enthusiasm of his renewed acquaintance with his former lady-love.

Next to the last evening that Poe spent in Richmond he called on Susan Talley, afterward Mrs. Weiss, with whom he discussed "The Raven," pointing out various defects which he might have remedied had he supposed that the world would capture that midnight bird and hang it up in the golden cage of a "Collection of Best Poems." He was haunted by the "ghost" which "each separate dying ember wrought" upon the floor, and had never been able to explain satisfactorily to himself how and why his head should have been "reclining on the cushion's velvet lining" when the topside would have been more convenient for any purpose except that of rhyme. However, it cannot be demanded of a poet that he should explain himself to anybody, least of all to himself. To his view, the shadow of the raven upon the floor was the most glaring of its impossibilities. "Not if you suppose a transom with the light shining through from an outer hall," replied the ingenious Susan.

When Poe left the Talley home he went to Duncan Lodge, a short distance away, and spent the night. The next night he was at Sadler's Old Market Hotel, leaving early in the morning for Philadelphia, but stopping in Baltimore, where came to him the tragic, mysterious end of all things.

Poe knew men as little as he knew any of the other every-day facts of life. In the depths of that ignorance he left his reputation in the hands of the only being he ever met who would tear it to shreds and throw it into the mire.

WOOING DOROTHEA

By Jessie A. McGriff

I WAS drowsing in one of those canvas chairs with canopied top which dot the beach at Atlantic City, and letting the sun bake the rheumatism out of my legs, when I heard the approach of murmuring voices, followed by two soft thuds on the sand near-by. Upon raising the flap of my chair, I perceived that the murmurs and thuds were occasioned by Anthony and Dorothea, who, judging from their wet bathing suits, had just emerged from the sea. They were plainly too intent on their own business to mark my proximity.

Anthony is my impetuous young nephew, who, along with quite aggressive good looks, possesses many other pleasant qualities. Dorothea is—well—simply Dorothea. Just at the moment, as she pulled off her cap and shook the salt spray from her hair, which instantly sprung into tight little spirals about her neck and ears, she presented the sweet, wholesome, rubicund look of a freshly tubbed youngster.

"It'll not dry before dinner—my hair," she exclaimed ruefully, "and Aunty will ask me where I've been, and I'll have to tell her, and she'll be shocked." Dorothea always uses her "ands" as pins with which to fasten her conversation together.

Anthony gave the mound of sand he was heaping about his legs a final pat and turned to look at her.

"Why shocked?" he asked.

"She does n't approve of my going in bathing with boys."

Anthony looked annoyed. "I was twenty-two last September," he asserted.

"With young men, then," she corrected.

"You were in yesterday with Uncle Jack."

"Oh, of course, your Uncle Jack."

"Well, he's only thirty-six, and that is n't antique in our day. His hair has only been white like that since he had that beastly spell of typhoid two years ago. Comparatively speaking, he might still be called a young man. And, any way, I don't think it safe, his going in with a lady. He can't swim on account of his game leg, and it's rotten taste his expecting a girl like you, who swims like a perch, to paddle about the shore with him in water up to her ankles."

I softly dropped the side curtain of my chair and wearily closed my eyes. It was true, what the boy had said, and a twinge, not altogether rheumatic, shot through me. I had taken advantage of the child's sweet consideration, not only in this, but in other ways. Because of my white hair and shortened leg, and because, perhaps, of the fact that I was senior member of the firm of Cromarty & Cromarty, the women about the place, according to their age and interests, had attempted, with insufferable solicitude, to mother or sister me—until the advent of Dorothea. Dorothea, dear, dimpled, dewy-sweet, who sympathized but never pitied; who, when I had explained with a smile that I was prescribed to stumble through life on an odd pair of legs, had merely smiled back at me, a tender smile of utter comprehension that somehow curled about my heart and lifted it into the sunshine. She never observed my infirmity, not by the merest flutter of an eyelid, but no day passed that she did not brighten it with some little act of unobtrusive kindness.

A stinging suspicion that perhaps I was indebted to Anthony for her consideration caused me to restrain the impulse to rise and make myself apparent. If I possessed no identity for her save as an avuncular shadow, reflected only by the sun of Anthony's presence, I would remain where I was and learn the truth, so I boldly raised again the flap of my chair.

Dorothea, arms braced behind her, eyes closed, was coaxing the rays of the sun to her dainty face. Anthony was surveying her with growing approval, which culminated in an expression of daring resolve. He edged a bit nearer, and she opened her eyes.

"Why are you staring at me?" she asked.

"I'm not."

"But you *were*."

"How do you know? You had your eyes shut."

"I could *feel* you." She turned away her face, but not before he had glimpsed the sweet color staining her cheek and ear. Few women, doubtless, had ever blushed so ingenuously for him before. He looked elated and impudently masterful, and, edging still nearer—the pestilent puppy!—thrust his arm behind her.

"Dorothea——" he began.

"Don't!" she exclaimed, in a shrinking flutter.

"Don't what?"

"Put your arm back there."

"Why? You don't want me to?"

"It is n't that. I suppose it does n't really matter—but—others might see and think—think—you had your arm round me, although, of course, it would n't be, really."

A slow grin overspread his face. "I see. So you object because 'it would n't be really'?"

"I did n't mean that. You know I did n't." She ground her small

heel furiously into the sand. "I think you're hateful, and I'll not speak to you again."

"Oh, yes, you will."

"No, not another word." She closed her lips stubbornly and gazed with feigned interest out to sea.

"Dorothea! Do you know what?"

She began to hum a little tune.

"Of course, if you don't want to hear it——" challenged the boy, with an air of mystery.

The little tune continued to be hummed.

"It was awfully rich," he insinuated. "That is, not exactly rich, either. It came nearer being thrilling, or, rather, it would have been thrilling if——" he paused.

"If——" he insisted.

A dimple flashed for an instant in the girl's cheek, and went out.

"If the thing had come off as I'd planned it," he finished; then waited anxiously.

She turned and surveyed him disdainfully from under her lashes.

"You're simply *dying* to tell me, are n't you, Anthony?"

"Oh, I guess I could manage to retain it a bit longer and survive. But if you really wish to know——"

"Go on."

"You won't get mad, will you?"

"Oh, *go on*."

"Well, then, just now, when you had your eyes shut—when you had your eyes shut—now, don't get mad—well, I was going to kiss you!"

"That would surely have been very silly of you," she reproved, but her voice was unsteady, which doubtless emboldened him.

"Would you have been vexed if I *had* kissed you? Would you have cared, Dorothea?"

"I—I—never let a boy kiss me in my life, Anthony." The words were spoken low, with a little catch at the end.

"Do you think it wrong?" he presently asked.

"I—yes, I suppose so."

The boyish banter in my nephew's eyes was replaced by very definite resolve.

"But it would n't be wrong if we were engaged!"

"No-o, I suppose not, *then*."

"Then, let's be engaged, Dorothea."

"You mean *really*—for keeps?"

"I'm not a trifler," he rebuked, with lofty reproach. He looked very earnest as he said it, and his eyes, as they searched her face, were tender and very blue and dear. He put his hand over hers where it lay half-buried in the sand. "Let's, dear," he persisted gently.

For a moment she gazed at him fascinated, then her face paled slowly, and, folding her arms across her knees, she bent her face upon them.

"Sweetheart!"

"Oh, Anthony, *don't!*" she almost sobbed. "I have n't thought about such things. When you look at me as you did just now, I seem to c-care—but, oh, I'm not *sure!* You must wait, Anthony, *please!*"

"But, sweetheart——"

"Oh, don't—don't! Wait! *Can't* you understand?"

Anthony looked grieved; then a trifle sulky.

"Of course, just as you wish," he agreed curtly, rising and brushing the sand from his knees. "Come and wash this grit out of your clothes. You look like a mud-pie."

She sprang to her feet. "All right! I'll race you!" and off they tore down to the sea.

I sat and stared after them with varied emotions. Anthony, it appeared, was in earnest. He was always in earnest—at the time. The last four years of his vehement young life were punctuated with periods of similar earnestness. Never by any chance did he apply a qualifying interrogation point to the state of his emotions. It would have been as incongruous to fasten a mild summer flirtation upon him as to bewhisker the countenance of Dante Alighieri. Therein lay his fascination and menace to a girl like Dorothea. She could raise no defense against his artlessness, his profound self-unconsciousness. I knew this only too well, having been reduced, on more than one occasion, to abject helplessness by a translucent stare from his heavenly blue eyes. Of course I was fond of him; but I was fonder of Dorothea. I longed to shield her, to steer her safely into some harbor less ominous of shallows and gusty amatory excursions than Anthony's.

As I watched him out there in the water, lifting her clear of the breakers with a vigorous sweep of his young arms, I wanted to shout warningly to her to beware of those arms to protect her from the brine of her own tears, should she entrust herself to them.

But, after all, it was Anthony's affair, not mine. Perhaps there were depths to his nature that only Dorothea's clear eyes could discern, and to her slender hands should be entrusted the mould for his maturer manhood. Youth and life and love—of what moment were they to me, distorted onlooker that I was, clutching desperately to a vague possibility that the doctors might finally succeed in boiling the ache out of my bones by means of a hellish hot-box contrivance in the basement of the hotel where I was staying? I drew out my watch and discovered that the inquisitional roasting hour was already at hand, and as I stumbled out of my chair I vowed that hereafter I would pay rigid attention to my bath and my diet and leave Anthony and Dorothea to build castles in the sand if they would.

I was sitting in a secluded corner of the sun parlor a week later when Dorothea approached, with a book under her arm and a bag of fancy work dangling at her side.

"I've come to plague for an hour," she said. "Do you mind?"

"Mind? Heavens, no! I have been famishing for a sight of you all week."

"It's been a case of voluntary starvation, then, for I've been quite accessible."

"I did n't see you at lunch."

"No; I stayed in my room. A headache."

"Headache? How conventional! You've taught me to expect better things of you, Miss Dorothea. By-the-by, where's Anthony?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. Shall I read to you?"

"Do, please. What have you there?" I reached over for the book. "*Is n't It So?*" Humph!" I turned a few pages and handed it back to her with a quizzical smile. "Of course it is n't so. It's sickly rot. Cut it out!"

"It is n't rot," denied Dorothea, pressing the book against her breast. "It *is* so. Why, listen to this: 'A man will leave no stone unturned to get the woman he loves. After he has her and has to replace some of the stones, he wonders and curses at their weight.' Now, is n't that so?"

"Nonsense! Pure nonsense."

"And this—here—listen: 'When a woman loves, she has neither eyes nor ears—nor ears—nor——'" Her voice trailed off indistinguishably, then stopped. Her eyes had left the printed page and were following a chair on the opposite side of the street, that was being wheeled towards the board-walk. Two-thirds of the chair was taken up by a voluptuous creature in a scorching red dress, which seemed to envelop her like a flame; the remaining third was given over to Anthony.

"Well, I'll be—devil! If it is n't Anthony and Cleopatra!" I gave vent to a low whistle of amazement and half rose to command a better view of the phenomenon.

"Is it Anthony?" drawled Dorothea, with marked unconcern. "Who is that—that—person he has with him?"

"Have n't you noticed her before? She sits near me in the dining-room—a Mrs. Radcliffe. She's taking hot hydro baths to reduce her weight. I meet her mornings in the basement corridor enveloped in a rain-coat, and from the boisterous color in her cheeks and the sweat of agony on her brow, I judge her to be a valiant soul determined to do or diet."

"Poor thing! She *is* fat." Dorothea's tone conveyed dulcet commiseration.

"Fat? Oh, I say! I think her rather stunning. So does Anthony, it appears."

"She's thirty-five if she's a day, and she tries to act girlish, and she blacks her eyebrows, and—and—— I don't think it kind of you to taunt me with Anthony." Her pretty under-lip was caught quickly between restraining teeth.

"Why, my dear child! I beg your pardon. I did n't mean——"

"I know you did n't. I guess I'm a goose." She veiled her eyes and rapidly turned the leaves of her book. Presently a great tear splashed down upon the page.

"Why, little girl, is it as bad as that?" I laid my hand for a moment on her arm. "Tell me about it, won't you? Can't you?"

She wavered an instant, then: "There is n't much to tell except that Anthony—that I—that we—are nearly engaged. That is, Anthony wanted me to, and I said, wait, and—and—he's waiting."

"Well, I'll be knocked into a cocked hat! Engaged! You two babies! How old are you, Dorothea?"

"I'm almost twenty," she defended stoutly.

"So much as that? Dear me! And Anthony's twenty-two and in the toils of a grass widow."

"Is she a grass widow? Oh, I'm so glad! I knew she was something horrid."

"What a vindictive little kitten you turn out to be! I should never have dreamed it. But tell me this—do you seriously wish to marry Anthony?"

She threw me a look half-startled, half-appealing. "I've got to marry some day, have n't I, or be an old maid? And I'd loathe being an old maid. I'd rather even be a widow—that is, a really truly widow, not a grass affair."

I leaned back in my chair and howled with mirth.

"I'm glad to afford you so much amusement." Dorothea arose, chin held high, face pink with mortification.

"Oh, don't go yet, please. I know I was a beast to laugh, but I could n't help it, really. Sit down. I've something to say to you. I want to help you out. *Won't* you sit down?" I caught the ribbon of her fancy-work bag and tugged at it coaxingly.

"Well," she conceded, resuming her seat. "I don't see how you can help. Still—if you mean well——"

"I do. I assure you I do. Now, see here, if you really want Anthony back——" I paused and gazed intently into her honest young face. How far dared I trust her intuitions? How far dared I interfere? "I mean this," I ventured finally: "Anthony is a mighty nice boy. I'm uncommonly fond of him—but—frankly, I don't think he'd make a girl like you happy. Of course he may grow; but—you see, he's immoderately handsome, and all the women know it, and they know also that he's junior member of the firm of Cromarty & Cromarty, a name

synonymous with a house on Fifth Avenue and a place up the Hudson. It's odious taste my mentioning such things, but, my dear, you're very young, in spite of your age, and I'm very fond of you, and even though Anthony stands a fair show of growing up into a mighty fine chap, life for him just now is apt to be a bit heady, you understand. However, if you're sure you care for him and it's making you miserable, why, hang it all! you shall have him back!"

"I don't want that fat, florid, flashy widow to have him," admitted Dorothea plaintively.

"I see. Well, give me a week, and at the end of it I'll wager to bring him to your feet whining to be noticed, but in the meantime you'll have to obey orders and be surprised at nothing you may see or hear. Are you game?"

"Of course I'm game. What must I do first?"

"First, you must be nice to me—uncommonly nice, I mean, as if you really enjoyed it."

"That's very easy. What next?"

"That's about all, at first. Later on—but never mind. For the present, let's hail a chair and join the board-walk procession."

During the following delightful week Dorothea, true to her word, was extravagantly nice to me. She assumed a sweet monitorship over my comings and goings, demanded that my diet be rigidly adhered to, kept a wary eye on her watch lest I neglect my daily grilling in the basement; read to me, took trolley rides with me, taught her swift, springy steps to keep pace with my halting ones, tossing Anthony, the while, a nod or preoccupied smile of tolerant friendliness which caused him at times to stare at me with an air of incredulous and lofty reproach.

Upon the afternoon of our finishing the last chapter of a new novel, Anthony deliberately rose from beside Mrs. Radcliffe and sauntered over to our corner of the piazza, where he stood uneasily at Dorothea's elbow. She kept on reading with exquisite unconcern.

"I say——" Anthony began.

She looked up, her finger marking the place. "Oh, it's you, Anthony! Have you read this? The hero's such a duck! He reminds me greatly of your Uncle Jack."

"Dorothea, will you come with me for a swim this afternoon?"

"Thanks, I'd love to—but—— Wait! I'll ask Aunty." She tripped over to where her aunt sat writing letters and returned with a wicked little gleam in her eyes.

"Aunty says I may—if Mrs. Radcliffe will chaperon us."

"Mrs. Radcliffe does n't care for surf-bathing," informed Anthony stiffly.

Dorothea turned and took deliberate stock of the lady in question: the perfectly magnificent coiffure, the peculiar dead white of her skin,

the intense black curve of her brows. "I see," she said, lifting her eyes guilelessly to his. "She's *afraid* of the water, is n't she?" Then, turning her back upon him, she bent over my chair. "I'm going down-town for some embroidery silk—do you mind? When I come back we'll finish that last chapter;" and off she tripped, leaving Anthony staring stupidly after her.

"I'll tell you what's what, Uncle Jack!" He turned suddenly upon me, his eyes very earnestly blue, his ears very startlingly pink. "I don't think you're being quite fair to Dorothea."

"How so, son?"

"Well, she's not getting enough exercise, for one thing, nor enough fun, for another. She came down here to freshen up after an awful stuffing last term at Vassar. The girl needs relaxation and recreation. Her aunt told me so. And here you are letting her tie herself to your coat-tails just because she's too tender-hearted to let on it's boring her. Of course I know it's none of my blooming business, and I hate like thunder to throw a wet blanket over your fun. Upon my word, I would n't think of it if I did n't see how much better you are and able to take care of yourself. But there's Dorothea. I can't help noticing that she looks a bit peaked and unlike herself lately. You're not crusty at my mentioning it, are you, old man?"

"My dear Tony, why should I be? What you say is undoubtedly true. I've been selfish, and shall take your tip and mend my ways."

I managed to smile pleasantly up at him as I said it, but, Lord, how the fellow had stung! My palms itched to box his ears.

For a moment he stood staring wistfully at Mrs. Radcliffe's profile, then he squared his shoulders, tossed the hair from his forehead, and put on his hat.

"Well, so long!" he said, and made off in the direction taken by Dorothea.

Plainly he was determined to do his duty by the young girl, at whatever cost. It was, therefore, incumbent that I should follow his lead. I had shilly-shallied long enough.

Just then Mrs. Radcliffe turned her head and fixed her sleepy cow-eyes upon me. I immediately made personal application of the look and returned it for all it was worth. Patting the seat of Dorothea's chair invitingly, I called out softly:

"Kind lady, won't you take pity on a poor old man?"

She replied with a slow, intense smile, and when Anthony and Dorothea returned, half an hour later, she was finishing aloud the last chapter of the new novel.

"And so the treatment is really curing you? Oh, I'm so glad, Mr. Cromarty!" Mrs. Radcliffe heaved a sigh of marked relief and rested

her hand on my sleeve. We were seated in a dim corner of the veranda surrounding the "Solarium" on the roof of the hotel. The place was deserted save for two quiet figures on my left, half-screened by an intervening palm. The rays from a young moon caught the jewels on the white fingers resting on my sleeve and seemed to flash a signal into the surrounding shadows.

"Do you know," she went on, in her deep, resonant contralto, "that my heart went out to you in silent sympathy from the very first? One day—but you'll think it *too* absurd. I'd best not mention it. You won't believe me."

I shook my head at her in playful remonstrance. "*Please!* I'm mad with curiosity. Don't be cruel. Tell me."

"Well, you know, I've always been frightfully interested in thought transference, mental healing, and all that, but I never dreamed of experimenting with it until one day as I passed your chair you seemed *so* depressed and tormented that I started right in *willing* your recovery. I just felt *compelled*, some way, and oh, you can't know the happiness it has given me to think that perhaps I have helped just the tiniest bit to restore your health, Mr. Cromarty."

"Dear lady! How kind you are! I must tell Anthony. It will please him greatly, I'm sure, to know I've won such charming immunity from my ills."

"Anthony? Oh, no!"—her voice flattened curiously. "I don't think he'd appreciate anything of that sort. He's dear and sweet, and I'm dreadfully fond of him, but—do you know, Mr. Cromarty, I often long to shake him for his inconsideration of you? I can't help seeing it and resenting it. Although, of course," she added hurriedly, "it's none of my business."

"Dear lady!" I ventured to repeat, with non-committal fervor.

With a slow, caressing movement, she smoothed out a fold in her dress, and dropped her voice to the complacent purr of a well-fed tabby. "We always feel a certain—certain—*tenderness*, Mr. Cromarty, for those who, like yourself, suffer greatly and uncomplainingly, and this—this *indifference* of Anthony's—but"—she broke off with a sigh of seemingly infinite regret—"I suppose boys will be boys."

I was on the verge of some safe and suitable rejoinder when the two silent figures behind the palm rose, with one accord, and moved hurriedly away.

Mrs. Radcliffe turned in her chair and looked long and anxiously after them.

"Do you suppose they *heard?*" she inquired, in a voice of unmistakable perturbation.

"Doubtless. But what if they did?" I reassured cheerfully.

She did not reply, and appeared so distraught that, under cover of

her preoccupation, I made my escape with vehement apologies for having bored her.

It was Anthony who, a couple of days later, informed me with a self-conscious air that Dorothea and her aunt were leaving Atlantic City in the morning. I felt surprised, even a little sore, at the news. Dorothea had said nothing to me about leaving. Moreover, she had lately avoided me with a persistency that bordered on rudeness. This was surely unnecessary. If she had finally decided that Anthony, of all men, promised her hope of future happiness, could she doubt that my hand and heart were quite ready for her, full of the loyalty and devotion of an elder brother? Why, then, this strange distrust of me?

As I pondered the matter, rolling along the board-walk in my chair, I spied her coming out of a Japanese junk-shop, her arms laden with useless bric-à-brac. Immediately upon recognizing my approach she turned quickly and a treacherous package wiggled from under her restraining elbow. In her spasmodic effort to rescue it, all her treasures came tumbling and sliding to the ground.

"Here!" I commanded, drawing up beside her. "Dump all that trash in my go-cart and let me get you away from here before you are mobbed."

With a little gasp of relief, mixed with chagrin, she obeyed. When she had settled herself beside me I cast an amused glance at the ruins at our feet.

"Why do you do it?" I asked.

"I'm sure I don't know. It's a weakness I can't overcome. I never mean to buy when I go in, and I always come out staggering."

I laughed indulgently. "I can foretell you will never reach years of discretion, Miss Dorothea. I'll have to play guardian over both you and Anthony in the days to come."

She gave me a startled glance and turned to arrange the cushions at her back. "Anthony—Anthony—" she stammered.

"There, there. I did n't mean to tease. You have something to say to me. Just a moment and I'll tell the man to draw up here by the railing and leave us to ourselves for half an hour. . . . Now," I encouraged, when he was out of earshot, "tell me."

"Anthony—" she began again, and stopped.

I reached over for the little hand lying in her lap. It was trembling and quite cold.

"Dear girl, you need n't go into details if they embarrass you. I understand."

"Oh, but you *don't!*" she hurriedly exclaimed. "You see, there is n't any Anthony now."

"You mean that he did n't—?"

"Oh, but he *did*. I would n't. You see"—she withdrew her hand

and faced me doggedly—"as soon as I began to be nice to you, Anthony resented it and began to notice me again. But I don't think he really wanted me—at least, he would n't come out and say so—until one night we were sitting on the porch of the Solarium. He had been trying to make me admit that I cared for him, and when I would n't he said something so silly and absurd that I became furious and refused to speak to him. Just then you and Mrs. Radcliffe came up and sat near us, and we could n't help hearing what you said. Afterwards, Anthony insisted that he'd only pretended to like Mrs. Radcliffe to test my confidence in him. He said she was a vain, silly woman, who was making a fool of you, and would n't I please let him announce our engagement right away and——" She paused for breath.

"You would n't?" I searched her face anxiously.

"I should n't have, any way, because—well, because I seem somehow to have grown up lately. But even if I had cared, I'd have refused when I saw how fearfully sore he was because you dared make love to Mrs. Radcliffe."

"I? Make love to that woman? Great suffering Socrates! When did that strike him?"

"It struck us both, I suppose, the night you were squeezing her hand and calling her your 'dear lady.'"

I gazed at her in silent wonder, then burst into a shout of delight at her dear simplicity. "Why, you blessed little silly," I chuckled, wiping my eyes, "do you suppose a man would deliberately select witnesses for that sort of thing? Do you?"

She bent towards me in sudden eagerness. "Do you mean to say——?"

"I mean that I purposely wheedled her along for Anthony's special benefit, knowing that he'd turn to you to bind up his wounded dignity, and daring to hope that you would refuse. It was neither a graceful nor chivalrous thing to do, perhaps, but"—my voice grew confoundedly husky—"as I've said before, I'm uncommonly fond of you, and jealous that life should yield you her greatest gift. Some day, somewhere, you will meet a wholesome, splendid chap eager to offer you infinitely more than Anthony ever will or can. Wait for him, dear girl."

Dorothea turned upon me soft, sweet eyes, brimful of tears. "You are the kindest man in the world," she said.

"Nonsense!" I gulped gruffly.

"I——" she began, then caught her breath hastily, and for an eternity, it seemed to me, we both stared stupidly out to sea.

"Tell me," I remarked finally, with a commendable effort at cheerful curiosity, "what absurdity Anthony tormented you with the other night? The thing that made you so furious with him?"

The color flew into her face, and I felt her arm tremble against mine as she faltered:

"He accused me of caring for you."

I smiled grimly, a trifle bitterly. "I don't wonder you felt insulted," I said shortly and closed my eyes to hide the stinging pain that shot into them.

"Oh!" There was a stifled sob, then I felt her fingers closing gently about my hand, lifting it, laying it against her soft, wet cheek. It was a lovely little silent act, her dear, pretty way of removing the sting, but, because of its very sweetness, how intolerable!

"Don't!" I jerked out harshly. "You don't need to. It hurts."

She quickly dropped my hand, and then—I caught sight of her face, all sweetly shamed and tremulous—and *her eyes!* She was a child no longer. A divine madness swept through me, claiming her as mine!

"Dorothea!" I protested unsteadily. "I never dreamed—I've tried to be decent, God knows, but I've grown so selfish, so hungry for you, dear—I—but it's all wrong, preposterous! Look at my white hair!"

"Yes. It is beautiful."

"And I'm close on forty, child."

"So much as that?" I felt rather than saw the dimple that trembled in her cheek.

"And—there's my game leg, dear."

"Yes," she agreed, "there's your game leg. All that and," she added, oh, so gently, "there's *you!*"



AS LIFE'S GAME IS PLAYED

"HUMAN Nature" is a handy scapegoat for all our faults.

Berton Braley

FORGERY: a crooked path with a steel pen at each end.

H. E. Ising

WHEN women vote will it be necessary to change the style of ballot each election?

L. B. Coley

INDIVIDUALITY in a man leads to success; in a woman, to being talked about.

Angie Ousley

MONEY talks—which is one way of saying that the wheel of fortune is full of spokes.

William J. Burtscher

SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN

By Lixette Woodworth Reese

"A LETTER for you, Mr. Hall."

"For me?" said the man.

"Yes; Mr.—Nelson—B.—Hall. Can't be anybody else. Nobody in the county with them two names but you."

Dan Weeks, the postmaster of the village of Woods, and keeper of the general store, looked across at his clerk with a fat, nutty laugh. A meagre cackle went up from the clerk.

Hall took the letter and held it up before him for a moment, then dropped it quietly into his pocket. He would take it out and read it at the turn in the road.

"Have you got all my things ready?" He ran over the articles from a list which he held in his hand: "One pound coffee, one quarter tea, two bars soap, corn-meal, blacking——"

"Yeast-cake, needles," finished Dan Weeks.

Hall paid his reckoning and went out.

"I wonder who's that from?" said the postmaster.

"Guess it's his wife."

"Guess not. Five years's a long time to hold out, Milton. Should think she would n't give up now."

"Ain't no telling what women'll do, Mr. Weeks."

The man going along the red, dusty pike outside was saying blankly to himself, "I wonder what she's writing to me for."

A hundred tossing other thoughts came into his mind, and all revolved around a masterful central one. He might see her again. He might see her again. Eternity itself had gone by since that last sight of her face. At the time when Hannah left him, he had been a youngish man, with a springy foot and a lively brown eye, a creature alert with life and a strain of the devil. Now he was almost elderly in looks; his step had grown mechanical, as if measured from post to post; he no longer saw anything beyond the accustomed affairs of house and shop. It was necessary to eat, drink, and sleep. It was a decent thing to work. Then there had often been a jest on his lips; now his voice was dry, his speech that of the bare business of the day. It had been his wont to sit out on the village stoops, and talk easily of crops, politics,

dogs, church,—a rustic Daniel, with a wisdom beyond his opportunities; now he kept to his dust-ridden kitchen, and smoked a long, solitary pipe, and stared across the dusk at the phantoms in the corner.

He held up the square blue envelope and read out the postmark in the corner. It was the name of a small factory town some fifty miles to the east of Woods. He had searched for her there and in a hundred places besides. That was in the first two years of her absence; for the past three he had let matters take their course. He remembered this town. A long, sooty street toiled down to a long, blackened little river, and down it passed a continuous procession of men and women, each with the strained look of poverty and fatigue. A treeless place, except for an acre of sad park, where two naked "slave girls," out of their tilted iron jars, poured a narrow stream of silver water into the basin below. He wondered how she could live in the glare and the tear of the factories, she who so loved the country and its punctual round of times and seasons. If she stuck a twig into the ground, it would grow. The calendar had been measured by the various blossomings in her garden: from crocus to crocus, from rose to rose; thus had run the year. Then it came to him that it was an easier matter to obtain a living in a manufacturing town than in any other. He did not like to think of this. It made her a part of that vulgar, jostling crowd, going up and down, day in and day out, on their errand of bread-winning. All the time he had been prospering. While that old emotional self of his lay in the corner, sucked out and lifeless, as it were, that other self, the head shrewd, cool, far-seeing, the two hands sound, capable, tool-loving, had added dollar after dollar and acre after acre to his starved paternal inheritance. From his back door, he could see more than one stretch of level green land down which the apple-trees crooked in long, regular rows. For a man may be a sinner, and yet the best mechanic in the country-side.

A sinner! The word struck at him like a blow. He stopped; went on again. Five years ago he had always expected the common decencies of character in his neighbors, in himself. He had not believed, because he had not known, that there was another strain in his being, as ancestral as the other; a spark which needed but a certain moment, a certain touch, to make it leap up into disastrous flame. There was a woman, a gay, pulsing, wayward creature, staying at the time on one of the farms in the neighborhood. Her round, black eyes, her small, bowed red lips, her laugh, full of a throbbing richness, her very name, so different in its foreign sweetness from the accustomed nomenclature of the country-side, had had each its lure for him. For one mad space in his life he had forgotten his staid Hannah. That was both the beginning and the end.

That last night! As he came along the road, he had noticed the

kitchen window in a flare of light, and wondered a little. His wife was not in the habit of staying up late any time. He remembered the click of the front gate. He remembered the gritty rolling of the pebbles from under his feet. All at once something piercingly fresh and sweet had blown out of the dark across his disordered senses—the mignonette over by the dew-drenched palings. Then he had looked up and seen Hannah standing in the doorway, waiting. She had asked one question and understood, and gone away without a word. The next morning, he had tramped out into the garden and uprooted the mignonette, to fling it with an oath down into the dust of the pike.

He had reached the turn in the road. Here stood a company of tall, young poplars, colored with the autumn, and making a little crying noise. A rain-bitten bench stood under the trees. He sat down and opened his letter:

NELSON:

I am coming back.

HANNAH.

He read it one, two, three times.

"Mr. Hall——"

He looked up.

"What you want, Mis' Stevens?"

The fat, unkempt woman who did his week's washing came lumbering toward him.

"I've just been and got the clothes. You were n't there, so I went upstairs and got them, anyways. I put the key under the kitchen door mat."

"All right."

"You'd better get the kitchen window fixed. I caught the cat sneaking meat out of the cupboard."

"Yes."

She drew nearer.

"A letter?"

He gave her a curt nod.

Sarah Stevens looked at him with a familiarity born of her knowledge of that old story. He stood up suddenly.

"I guess I'd better be going," said the woman.

Hall stood quite still among the falling yellow leaves. The only sensation of which he was conscious at the moment was that of hunger. He had never known until then how starved he was for a sight, for a word, of her. He tried to imagine her reasons for coming. Perhaps she wished to gather up her various belongings—a bureau with glass knobs to the drawers, a straight oaken clock which had been her great-uncle's. Hannah was of a thrifty make, and none too likely to under-

value anything which was especially her own. It would not hurt her so much to meet him now on the cool, impersonal plane of property as it would have done at first. One other reason came into his mind: she might be coming to talk over a legal separation, a divorce. No doubt she had changed her strict notions in regard to the latter. She had a right to it; she had a right to marry again if she chose. He put the letter back into his pocket.

As he went along the pike, her face went with him, a face unchanged by years, with steady eyes and a mouth both sweet and stubborn. The hair was commencing to turn a pale gray along the temples; too soon indeed, but that was characteristic of her family. Her sister had been white before she was twenty. Another emotion stirred him. He felt young again, young and sad. It was as if those long, abandoned years had slipped into a softened distance, and left him ready once more for the beginning of things. He began to ache. There would be no more beginnings.

And then he trudged on. And suddenly, as it appeared to him, he came to his own house, fronting the east and to the right of the road. It had a sere, thin look. Half the shutters were closed. The windows of only two rooms gave a welcoming, those of the kitchen and the bedroom directly overhead. A few wine-colored chrysanthemums, the indomitable remnant of the garden which once had been, made a single blaze at the doorstep. All the rest was ranks of shrivelled gray weeds, or a blur of brown, where at the gate the stonecrop had flaunted its thick, crude pink.

Hall drew out the key from under the kitchen mat, unlocked the door, and entered. One by one his packages were deposited upon the shelves of the corner cupboard. He sat down then and stared about him. A poor room, indeed, simply a man's stopping-place, so many feet wide, so many feet deep, with the proper amount of yellow wooden furniture, four chairs, a table, the dresser in the corner. He got up and put the chairs back against the wall, and straightened the cloth on the table. At every step he took, a little whiff of dust puffed up from the worn carpet. Hannah would see Sarah Stevens's inadequacy at the first glance of her steady eyes. But Hannah would come to the parlor door, not to the kitchen one. Her visit would be formal, not friendly; that of a guest, as it were.

He pushed into the sitting-room, dark and shuttered, crossed it with fumbling feet, and then into the apartment lying at the front of the house. He unbolted the door—it was five years since the last unbolting—and flung it wide open. A pungent odor of the fading year came full upon him. Sarah Stevens never troubled this room, and yet it was strangely in order. The old, pink-tinted shells, mementos of her sea-going uncle, lay on their scalloped edges along the little fluted,

white-painted mantel. Above them hung an engraving—"The Death-bed of John Wesley." Below, in the open fireplace, the huge handful of asparagus, plucked and withered long ago, shed a thousand tiny soot-like specks upon the abandoned hearth. His eye singled out the strip of finely-worn rag-carpet stretched—to save the matting—from door to door. Over by one of the windows stood her organ, still with the hymn-book flattened out upon the rack. The ghosts of all the hymns which she had ever sung went crying thinly down the air, and presently one set itself to words, and it was as if all the days had resolved themselves into a long, sunny, unhaunted Sunday afternoon, and she herself sat there singing it with all the fervor of her Methodist training. Behind it piped the crickets in the front yard.

He sat down in the arm-chair and let the soul of the place surge over him. It had taken two years to gather together the money for that set of haircloth furniture. The almost boyish delight with which she had welcomed the fruition of her simple ambition put a touch of sanctity on the meagre wood, the gay upholstery. What had his life been since her going away? A clinging to each day's work as a drowning man clings to a spar. The awe of the moment was upon him. He had never felt so black, so stained, so futile, before. He sat there a long time. Gradually the light slipped out of the air. The sky, like a cup overbrimming with some tender liquid, held all the radiance that there was—deep red in the west behind the house, faint rose beyond the pastures in the east. A cow-bell clanked from a hollow.

"Oh, God!" cried the man.

Presently a step sounded down the pike, now steady, now hesitant. It passed the opened gate, came back, came slowly along the porch.

He rose.

"Hannah!"

They stared at each other across the dusk.

"Sit—sit down."

"No, no, not that chair." Her voice was as quick, as certain, as ever. "I'll sit here on the sill."

He went back to the arm-chair.

She spoke again, and her voice was different:

"I guess you want to know why I come back."

"Yes, Hannah."

"I've come back to stay."

He burst out passionately: "I ain't good enough for you. I ain't good enough. You better think about what you're doing."

"Do—do you want me?"

"My God, Hannah! to ask that!"

Her figure, a mere outline in the pale light of the doorway, appeared to be melting away into the dark. Soon only her soft breathing would

tell him she was there. A sense of very old, brooding, maternal things, a something warm yet poignant, was in the air.

"I must tell you what made me come back, Nelson."

"I ain't good enough for you, I tell you!"

"Now, you listen!" She was her old insistent self again. "It's taken a good deal for to think it all out, and if you keep talking, I won't get it right." A pause. "Well, at first, I could n't have done anything but what I did."

Another pause.

"It seemed to me that—that what you'd done—it was n't only done to me, though of course that was the first thing I thought, but to all the other people in the world—not only the women, but every woman, good or bad, and the children and men, too. And it was too big a thing to get over just at once."

"I ain't blaming you."

"It would n't have been any different if you had. I ain't made that way, and I guess no other woman is. The Lord allows women to be that way because somebody's got to be *hard*. If we thought as light of some things as men do, there would n't be any living in the world. We hate them things; it ain't in us to forgive them easy. It would n't be right if we did."

The man, sitting there in the fast increasing dark, heard her voice as if it were the voice of one in a dream. And yet, over it all and under it all, ran a consciousness that something had gone out of his world forever. He was not the man that he had been at first. He would never be. But Hannah's bare, righteous words had pricked this consciousness into an ugly definiteness which it had not held before. The harm of his sin became suddenly apparent. The sin itself rose sharply before him, lashing with its poisoned scourge at the pure, the struggling, the innocent. He had set the superb scheme of things awry; he had turned the stars out of their courses. Why did she not rise and flee shrieking away from him? Yet he was glad that she did not. Her presence seemed to bind him to that better thing of which she was a part.

"And then——" She stopped. It appeared more difficult for her to speak. She went on again: "Then I went away and worked, and it was hard. It was hard working and not having things of my own, and not belonging to anybody. And all the time I had to try and not let people know who I was. Them town folks are awful curious."

She stopped again.

"And I quit going to church. I just could n't. For one Sunday the preacher talked about forgiving, and that seventy times seven meant not only brothers and sisters and cousins and so on, but wives and husbands. I could n't stand that——"

"Hannah!"

"Well?"

"You're 'most talking as if you'd done it yourself."

"I've just got to tell it the way I want to."

"You need n't tell anything a'tall."

"I have to," she said simply. "I'm trying to tell how I come to see both sides of the question."

Then he began dimly to understand that it was her woman's painful, expiatory way of saying that she had forgiven him.

She leaned forward out of the dusk.

"And one day I saw—her."

"Hannah!"

She turned on him sharply. "Don't you ever think, Nelson Hall, that I ever thought you were right. I never thought that. It would n't have been decent." She waited a little. When she next spoke she was quiet again: "But I began to see how—how it might have happened. It was just as if you had been drinking plain cold water all your life, and then of a sudden somebody gave you wine. Good looks is like wine."

"I don't ask you to excuse me."

"I'm not. Don't I keep telling you that you were n't right?"

He grew silent again.

"And then—then I got so tired. Them whistles was awful noisy in the morning. It seemed as if the whole world was nothing but whistles, and they kept a-tooting and tooting. You could n't turn but they were tooting. And it just wore you out cleaning. You would n't believe how hard it was to keep one room decent, the soot was so bad."

He did not dare to say a word.

Out in the pike a foot sounded, then another. A group of people passed, talking leisurely, with pauses between the words. A girl's laugh—a mere gay snatch—drifted down the warm vague air.

"It ain't funny," said the voice. "Suppose you trusted somebody for years, and then got cheated."

"It's awful!" said the girl's voice. "I was n't laughing 'bout that, Miss Brown, but you told it so comical."

"I think I'd die."

The footsteps went by; the voices ceased. The crickets were piping in the front yard.

"Who're they talking about?"

"I guess it's 'Liza Shores. She ran off from Dick the other day—a week ago, maybe."

"Who'd she go with?"

"Some fellow along down on the railroad."

"Dick's a good soul."

Hall burst out with a passion that drove the words quivering from his lips:

"My God! that's the worst of it all. That's the worst of it all. He trusted 'Liza, and you trusted me. It's the worst of it all, I tell you."

"Maybe it is."

He fell silent again.

The woman on the door-step stirred uneasily.

"I'm going to tell you everything about it. Well, there was a man down in town, and he—he asked to marry me. He'd 've made me a good husband, and given me a good home. I wanted to marry that man. Can't you see—can't you see that I wanted to do just what you really did? Can't you see? I was n't any more right in my thought than you."

"No, Hannah."

"I had n't any right to think of getting married, and yet I wanted to. I did n't go as far as you, but we're alike; in thought we are."

"No, Hannah."

"It's the same; in thought it is. It's the same. Were n't you still my husband? What right had I to think about another man? No more'n you had to think about another woman."

"It ain't the same."

"It is."

Once more it appeared difficult for her to speak.

"And I—I never cared for him, and that made it worse."

He said nothing.

"And then—then I got sick."

"Were you sick long?" His voice sounded almost awkward.

"Maybe six weeks." She leaned forward again; her tone changed suddenly: "You have n't kept the garden up?"

"No."

"I know it's a wilderness. But them chrysanthemums do smell homy. The red ones?"

"Yes."

"Who does your cleaning for you?"

"Sarah Stevens."

"Sa-rah Stev-ens!"

It was so dark that he could no longer see her. And she was so unchanged! So righteous, so housewifely! If she went away again—for he did not dare believe that she had in mind to stay—everything would come to an end. Live another round of long, blank, staring years? No! He would be a worse man than ever before. He wondered whether he could make her, even though dimly, understand this.

She was speaking again.

"And I lay in bed and thought and thought," she said simply, "and the only thing I thought about was, seventy times seven. *Seventy times seven.* I heard it and I saw it, and when I got up it followed me around. Brothers and sisters, and wives and husbands, too. And I began to see that there are two sides to a wrong as well as two sides to a right. And there are reasons for doing wrong things as well as for doing right ones."

"Oh, Hannah!"

"So I come back."

Hall stood up.

"Let me talk now. I'm not going to say anything about what happened. You've said it all, and every word is the truth. I ain't good enough for you. I'll say that a thousand times. And I ain't the man I was, except for my work, and I never have been, and I never will be—though I've kept straight. I've kept straight, I tell you."

Again that brooding sense in the air, as of something very old, and strong, and maternal, and yet very young and poignant, with the youth and the poignancy of spring. Was it Youth? Was it Love? Was it Youth and Love and Divine Forgiveness, all three in one?

"You poor boy!" said the woman.

He went groping toward her in the dark.

"Hannah!"

LULLABY

BY WITTER BYNNER

I 'LL send you now sailing across the sea,
 I'll send you now sailing away,—
 Out where the fishes
 Love to be,
 Out where the gulls
 Are at play.

And then you'll come sailing from far-away,
 Come sailing from over the sea;
 Back where a baby
 Loves to stay,
 Back again home—
 To me!



WAYS OF THE HOUR

A DEPARTMENT OF CURRENT COMMENT AND
CRITICISM—SANE, STIMULATING, OPTIMISTIC

COMPENSATION FOR FALSE IMPRISONMENT

ONE of the sanest and most clearly just of the many efforts to reform criminological procedure is the proposition that the State or the municipality compensate or otherwise make amends to those persons who have been unjustly arrested and imprisoned. Within the experience of all of us have come cases where suspected persons have been incarcerated, compelled to lie in jail for many months, put to the trouble and expense of hiring lawyers, only to be finally acquitted.

There is much irony about acquittal under such circumstances. In spite of the formal verdict of the court, the defendant is sent forth not only with the ineradicable stigma which a serious charge, even though unsustained, always leaves, but in addition to that he is perhaps in debt, and, if he has a family, they too have suffered in the meantime. The State makes little or no effort to rectify its mistakes along these lines. If a man is so unfortunate as to be suspected; if overzealous detectives or policemen invade some poor devil's person merely to show that they are themselves active; if some enemy swears falsely against another and secures the coöperation of the State in his personal quarrels, the victim, once attacked, cannot possibly escape punishment. If the man is friendless, or if the machinery of the law is slow in working, the punishment is all the greater.

A recent glaring instance of this is being cited by the criminologists. It is the case of John Roberts, who, after being imprisoned for seventeen

years, was found to be the wrong man. This case was so flagrant and so exceptional that he was awarded \$7,500 by the Board of Claims, but this award was reversed and denied by the Court of Appeals of New York.

Unjust as this may appear, however, it is not so much for these exceptional cases that reform is necessary, but for the innumerable daily cases. "Held as a witness," we frequently read. This means that men are arrested and kept in jail until the trial of some other man comes up. The only crime in this case is that the victim happens to know something about a certain matter. There is no redress in such cases.

The criminologists tell us that the United States is far behind other countries in this respect, notably Germany, which provides compensation not only for those who are wrongly accused, but also for those who are tried and acquitted for lack of sufficient evidence. It is such clear cases of unfairness which furnish fertile ground in which to sow the seed of the attacks against the courts, which have been so numerous lately. If society remains in the business of punishing others for their mistakes, it must learn to punish itself for its own mistakes. Only in that way can continued respect for the courts be maintained inviolate.

ELLIS O. JONES

MUCK-RAKING

EMERSON says: "Many a reformer perishes in his removal of rubbish, and that makes the offensiveness of the class. . . . They expend all their energy on some accidental evil, and lose their sanity and power of benefit. It is of little moment that one or two, or twenty, errors of our social system be corrected, but of much more that the man be in his senses."

Emerson speaks as an individualist, and it is, perhaps, as a fellow-individualist that Mr. Taft upbraids muck-rakers; who are, in general, scribbling reformers. Emerson's point of view seems to be that the sanity of the individual is worth more than the amelioration of the common lot. And certainly the most effective reformer is he who retains his sense of proportion; for there are so many evils that if one attacks them indiscriminately he ends (as a fair share of philanthropists have done, from Timon of Athens down to Jean Jacques Rousseau) in impotent misanthropy. The hard lot of some of the muck-raking journals nowadays seems to point this moral and adorn this tale: the public has wearied of incessant petulance and denunciation. For the intelligent reformer, for the muck-raker who keeps his head, there is, doubtless, a future of high usefulness and honor. Only, the public has told the young fry in journalism: "Please don't always talk to us at the top of your voice, and don't use so many exclamation-points!"

W. B. BLAKE

THOSE WHO TRAVEL

IT is practically undebatable that when people travel for pleasure, pleasure is what they travel for. Yet how many get it, or, if they do get it, find that the wear and tear in mind, body, and pocket-book have been almost prohibitive? And why is it thus? The answer is easy. It is because those who travel are not philosophers. And not mere philosophers, but profound philosophers. Unless they are that, they will find that pleasure in travel is a delusion and a snare, a burden and a disappointment. The ordinary traveller comes home after his trip, long or short as it may be, swearing mad and worn to a frazzle. The philosophic traveller gets back home serene and satisfied. There's a reason for this. Listen. First off, before the traveller sets forth on his journey, he must be fully assured that travellers in general are the legitimate prey of everybody who is not travelling, that is to say, who is at home, trying to make just as much money as he can without violating the Constitution and the by-laws. Sometimes the limit is exceeded, but this is usually not intended, or, if intended, the violator tries to make it only so far beyond that the traveller will not think it worth while to delay his journey in order to get even. When the traveller is thoroughly convinced that he is the legitimate prey of everybody who is not travelling, he will permit himself to be overcharged, to be ill-treated, to be swindled in small things, to be neglected for more profitable travellers, to be rammed and jammed and generally imposed upon, and will take it all composedly and in good-humor, knowing that he is only getting what is coming to him, and that if any of his fellow-travellers are not treated likewise they more than make up for it in what they have to pay for immunity.

Secondly, to be comfortable, the traveller must not go forth expecting to practise home economies. What he must do is to set aside a certain sum as travelling expenses and let it go freely, reserving only so much as will get him home again by the shortest route. When he goes to his train or boat, he should go in a cab. It costs more, but he gets there without being tired out carrying hand luggage, or worried because the street-car is held up and he has just time to get aboard, hot and puffing and mad and ugly all over. He should ride in a parlor car, if by day, or a sleeper, if by night, because in either case he is sure of his place and is not crowded in like a steer in a stock-car. It costs more, but what is his travelling fund for? Is n't he travelling for pleasure? Then why not have it? He can practise economy at home. When he goes to a hotel, he should go to a good one—not necessarily the most expensive, because that is often not the best, but to a good one, where he will have comfortable lodging and edible food. It may cost him four or five dollars a day, and he could save as much as two dollars a day by going

to a cheap place, but is he travelling for that? He is not. He is travelling for pleasure, and often tells people so. He likes to do it, because it sounds more elegant than to say he makes his living as a travelling man. It really is more elegant, because travellers for pleasure are supposed to have money, while the other kind have n't. That's why they have to travel.

The comforts of travel constitute one of its chief pleasures, and to have comforts one must pay for them. The traveller who expects to do this, and has his mind fully made up not to economize, will find it a great relief to give no thought to the passing dollar. Let it go. That's what it was saved up for, so why try to retain it, or mourn its loss? He may not always get his money's worth—indeed, he seldom will—but if he realizes that fully when he starts out, he will be disappointed if he has a dollar left when he gets home again. The great difficulty with the great majority of travellers is that they think they can take their home customs and ideas along with them and fit them to all other people and places. They cannot. The only way to travel for pleasure is for the traveller to fit himself to other people, places, and conditions, and pay the cost of it cheerfully, knowing that it need not continue long if he does n't want it to.

W. J. LAMPTON

THE FLY

THE fly has lately been much in the public eye. It is a small creature, with a large capacity for keeping mankind interested in the vicissitudes of existence, manifesting, in its habits, an activity and a ubiquity in no other creature save, perhaps, a citizen who has been stung by the Presidential Bee.

Its period of greatest activity is in hot weather, when it provokes much comment, most of which resembles the weather. It has been called many names, ranging from *musca domestica*, an appellation fastened upon it by the scientists, down to terms which cannot be set forth here, owing to the limitations of the United States postal laws.

Scientific research has demonstrated that the fly is the cause of most of the ills of the flesh and the body politic. As a result, it is subjected to many dangers and pitfalls. Notable among these is sticky fly-paper, which terminates the activities of many flies and awakens those of not a few humans. The actions and the language of a citizen who has entered a darkened room and sat upon a sheet of sticky fly-paper, or placed his top-hat bottom side up thereon, cause one to reflect that, after all, our boasted civilization is but a thin veneer.

The "swat the fly" movement, which of late years has enjoyed quite a vogue, has injected the spice of adventure into the lives of both the swatter and the swattee. No more stirring spectacle can be imag-

ined than an obstacle race between a nimble and elusive fly and an irate citizen, exuding perspiration and profanity, and armed with a folded newspaper or some other swatting instrument. The ability of the fly to defy the law of gravitation, and its penchant for taking refuge on electroliers or among fragile *objets d'art*, place the pursuit of it in the category of kingly sports.

Despite the multitudinous perils which beset it, and the fact that there has been no closed season defined for its protection, the fly is an admirable exponent of the anti-race-suicide propaganda, being very assiduous and successful in the perpetuation of the species.

In its search for food, it betrays a catholicity of taste unmatched in any other creature, excepting, possibly, a certain type of *bon vivant* which frequents the lobster palaces of our large cities.

In spite of all the evil which is spoken of it, it must be admitted that the fly, in a small way, is a power for good in the land; for a single specimen is more efficacious than the most expensive alarm-clock when it comes to arousing a lazy citizen who would fain lie abed on Sunday morning while duty and the church-bell call upon him to hie himself unto the house of worship.

EDMUND MOBERLY

WHAT FAME BRINGS TO A POPULAR DIVA

WHEN Madame Louisa Tetrizzini was singing in San Francisco five years ago, her fame had not spread to the East, and at least two important interests failed to embrace the opportunity offered to them by the diva at that time.

Tetrizzini was singing at the Tivoli Gardens. Her weekly salary at the outset was three hundred and fifty dollars, and as her fame grew the management increased her honorarium until she was paid three hundred dollars a night. The late Herr Conried was then in charge of the Metropolitan Opera House in New York. In response to a telegram asking her terms for a five-year contract, the diva replied that she would sing for five hundred dollars a night. These terms the impresario declined.

This was fortunate for the new diva, who sailed for Europe and sang at Covent Garden in London, where she was paid a thousand dollars a night, and also created the greatest furore ever achieved in an English opera house. Her success was so pronounced that even Melba was relegated to second place. It happened that Oscar Hammerstein was in need of a star for his new opera houses in New York and Philadelphia. The intrepid Oscar signed Tetrizzini for three years at a nightly honorarium of fifteen hundred dollars. The directors of the Metropolitan made a similar offer, but Oscar was given the preference.

Tetrazzini's star has been in the ascendant ever since; and recently she had the great satisfaction of putting her signature to a contract with the Metropolitan directors by which she is to receive the coming season three thousand dollars a night—just six hundred per cent. more than she was available for when she sought to sing at this institution five years ago.

But if the operatic impresarios have cause to regret their lost opportunity, what may be said of a leading phonograph company, which at the same period in her career refused to pay the diva one thousand dollars for the exclusive right to the vocal records for her entire repertoire.

This same phonograph company has since contracted with Tetrazzini for exactly the same privilege; but the terms were wholly different. Instead of one thousand dollars paid outright, the diva received a bonus of thirty-five thousand dollars, while her royalties in addition amount to about forty thousand dollars annually. Such is fame.

ROBERT GRAU

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF MOTORISTS

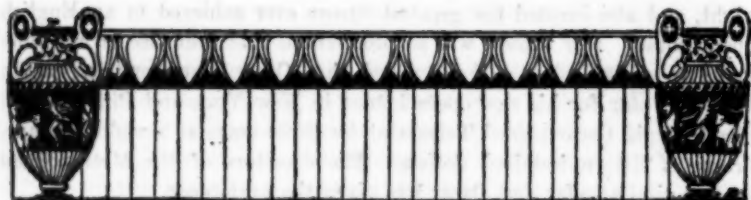
IN Germany legislation provides for the physical examination of persons applying for motor licenses. This examination is much more rigid than might be expected. Of course, nearly normal vision and hearing are required. Those having squinting or astigmatic eyes, the color blind, and the night blind are rejected.

In the case of hearing, the whispered voice must be heard at nine feet. Especial attention is paid to the detection of those suffering from neurasthenia, giddiness, or insanity—these of course being barred.

The arm and the leg most used in operating a machine must be normal, and in case the applicant has lost one or more fingers, or has deformities of the hand, he is given an opportunity to demonstrate his fitness or unfitness for driving a car.

The provisions of this examination are so sane that the general adoption of regulations along the same lines would, in my opinion, greatly reduce the number of automobile accidents in this country.

F. M. BOGAN



IN THE KINGDOM OF NOT-IN- THE-LEAST-BIT-LIKE-IT

By Kate Masterson

THE heralds had announced the betrothal through the streets of the Kingdom. The haughty Princess Amaranthe was to marry the Prince Bobberino. The bells had rung from the Castle tower, and now it was only a few days before the wedding. Garlands hung over the great gates, and in a score of humble cottages village maidens worked night and day to weave the filmy lace veil that was to drape the cold face of Amaranthe as she went to the altar to meet the man who had been chosen for her by the parents of the two young people.

One girl, Melange, the village beauty, granddaughter of the King's market gardener, shed bitter tears over the lace, for she had long worshipped the Prince Bobberino in secret. As he rode to the hunt on his prancing white horse, she had looked from her curtained window with beating heart and flushed cheeks, hoping to catch a laughing glance from his dark eyes, for Bobberino was a debonair and gallant Prince.

Then Melange would look in the mirror, for she knew that she was beautiful, and she had dared to dream dreams of what might be if she could in some manner draw the Prince's attention to her golden hair, her violet blue eyes, her scarlet mouth like a rose, and her snowy throat and shoulders. It was folly, of course, but Melange had read tales of princes who had fallen in love with beggar maids and raised them to the throne.

One of these stories was called "The Path of Roses," and it was so wonderful that the girl read and reread it, and found in it a spell—a charm. She tried to plan some way in which she could make a path over which his feet would stray until they brought to her her heart's desire.

In this story a beggar girl who loved the King had carried a cluster of pink roses which she meant to throw under his horse's feet as he rode through the forest. She hid the flowers beneath her ragged cloak, but when she heard him coming, far off in the woods, she was seized with a fright and ran like a deer through the trees.

And as she ran the blossoms were crushed in her arms, and they fell, leaf by leaf, along the grass, leaving a trail of rose-leaves. The King's fancy was spurred, and with horn and hound he led the way gaily over hill and dell, through rough, thorny bushes and across running brooks,

until they found the girl, exhausted and weeping, fallen beneath a tree, frightened out of her wits by the chase.

But the King was so enchanted with her beauty and the odd manner in which he had found her that he placed her on his horse and, walking beside her, led her back to the palace, where he made her his Queen.

Melange resolved on a very daring act. She had to bring the lace to the Castle in person and deliver it at the chamber of the Princess Amaranthe. She had no roses, for it was mid-winter, but she stole into the hothouses and gathered several bunches of the finest lettuce with hearts of gold, which her grandfather raised for the King's table.

She broke them carefully apart and hid them under her cape of scarlet before she set out for the Castle. Her heart was beating violently, and her long, burnished golden hair hung far below her waist. Her little shoes were red and her eyes glowed like stars. She would put her fate to the touch, and if she but caught one glance from the Prince's eye, she would laugh at him as she had been expressly forbidden to do at all men.

As she drew near the Castle, she grew bolder. She saw the Prince Bobberino walking on the terrace. He was in blue satin and gold, with a feathered velvet hat, and wore his jewelled sword. Melange trilled a little song as she picked her steps daintily across the courtyard, and her heart stopped beating as he paused to gaze at her. Then she began to drop the lettuce, leaf by leaf, along the path, over the bridge, up the steps of the terrace, where he stood as though rooted to the stone.

Through the great oaken doorway she passed, and one by one her fluttering messages fell to the ground. At the last doorway, she looked back and saw him start suddenly as though to pursue her. And now she ran—actually ran, just like the girl in the story. Here and there she hurried, breathless with excitement, hearing his step behind her, his voice calling to her to stay.

But the lettuce gave out, and though she waited in the shadow of a suit of armor, he did not come. She finally came out of her hiding, and asked the way to the Princess's rooms. Here she delivered the packet of lace, trembling so that she could scarcely speak.

Suddenly she heard a tumult in the hallway, and saw the Prince's messenger advancing. He was followed by two pages bearing a basket filled with the lettuce-leaves she had dropped—nearly a peck measure. The herald was very angry. He called to one of the guards at the entrance door to the Princess's chamber:

"The Prince Bobberino orders that this young person be dropped through the turret chute into the rear alley. Hereafter she is to bring the vegetables through the tradesmen's entrance, and if she scatters any of them along the floor she is to be hurled from the battlements at day-break. The Prince wishes to know where are the tomatoes?"

SHORT-STORY MASTERPIECES

SECOND SERIES—RUSSIAN

II. IN EXILE

By Anton Chékhov

DONE INTO ENGLISH BY JOHN COUNOS, AND WITH
INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR

CHÉKHOV, RECORDER OF LOST ILLUSIONS

THE history—that is, the philosophical history—of a national literature is sure to reveal the close relation subsisting between the significant social movements of that nation and its literature. Those who think lightly of fiction as a force in a people's life fail to recognize that in the large it is something more than a mirror of the times, since worthy fiction must be an expression—and that the most vivid possible—of the ideals, the faiths, the scepticisms, the struggles, the foibles, the prejudices, the occupations light and serious, and, chiefly, the social ferment, of the era it represents, because out of, and not merely during, that era it was born.

While really no more applicable to Russia than to any other nation, this representative quality of literature is more startlingly apparent in Slavic literature than in any other. During the period just preceding 1880, the "back to the people" movement was at its height. Tolstoi's life among his peasants inspired many to imitation—but that is a story by itself. Enough to note here that the movement broke down of its own weight, as all social movements must which think to fill old skins with new wine. And Anton Pavlovich Chékhov came to a full though depressing inheritance of the stunned discouragement characteristic of the early eighties. In common with his entire school, Chékhov's philosophy embraced three paramount tenets: The "system" in Russia is productive of evil, and evil only; there is no present hope of better things; but for the future, such hope as may gestate unborn can come to birth only by the Russian people's facing the full truth honestly and fearlessly.

Here is a social philosophy which is something more than pessimism, for while it believes that things must be worse before they can be better, it neither denies nor predicts the coming of that meliorated day. The

true basis of Russian realism is thus seen to differ from the French: French realism is sensational and of the senses; that of Russia is intellectual and largely for a patriotic purpose.

Chékhov was a south-Russian, born January 17, 1860, in Taganrog, a seaport on an arm of the Black Sea, near the mouth of the river Don. His father was a serf, whose ambition and ability led him early to buy his freedom and provide for the education of his four children. Anton passed through the local college and was graduated from the school of medicine at Moscow, but more than his year as a hospital interne, and a volunteer service during an epidemic of cholera, he did not practise.

His medical education, however, set the tone for Chékhov's literary work, for he became a great pathologist of character, dealing chiefly with those sick of mind and heart whom we are wont to think of as unnormal. Early afflicted with the tubercular trouble which he combated in vain, and which carried him off July 2, 1904, in Badenweiler, Germany, at forty-four, he disclosed in his work, as Professor Phelps has pointed out, the double character of the observing physician and the sick patient. To both the observer and the observed, in such a dual rôle, trivialities would assume a larger interest than to the typical healthy man writing of complacent themes in a rosy land. And so they did to Chékhov—as will more and more appear.

While yet the youth was in the University (1879) he began to write "fugitive sketches" for the minor metropolitan newspapers, and eventually for the better-known *Novoe Vremya* and the *St. Petersburg Gazette*. A humor keen, if somewhat coarse, characterized these productions, which were often only a few hundred words in length. This light satirical tone prevailed until after the appearance in 1887 of his first book. Perhaps the critical disapproval it aroused made him see that one who could write so well might be better employed than in merely making people laugh, as one reviewer expressed it. At all events, his later work was more serious, though always a subtle, intellectual humor might be found—for it often lurked—in his most sober fictional and dramatic writings.

Chékhov was so modest, so retiring, so diffident even, that he came to his own by dint of sheer merit. When in the later years of his short life he married Olga Knipper, the blonde beauty of the Théâtre Libre, they took a villa at Yalta, on the Black Sea, for the husband's enfeebled health demanded a milder climate than that of the metropolis. At Yalta, for a time, dwelt also Tolstoi and Gorky, and there Chékhov learned to know his brother writers. With that sincere big-heartedness which is happily characteristic of each of the Russian litterateurs chosen for inclusion in this series, both did much to bring his work to the attention of the public to which they were themselves looking.

With Tolstoi's convictions Chékhov had little in common, so he did not seek him out. But the elder artist went to the younger, and a firm friendship ensued. That the enthusiastic prophesies of both Tolstoi and Gorky were not fully realized was doubtless due to the untimely ending of a career so full of promise and of real literary achievement.

Naturally, Chékhov's attitude toward life was something more personal than was his conscious philosophy. The lost illusions of the Russian people—I speak now of the Russia of the late eighties and early nineties—were perfectly reflected in our author's work. Of one of his characters he writes:

The Student remembered that when he left the house his mother sat in the hall, barefooted, and cleaned the samovar; and his father lay upon the stove and coughed; and because it was Good Friday nothing was being cooked at home, though he was tortured with desire to eat. And now, shivering with cold, the Student reflected that just the same icy wind blew in the reign of Rurik, in the reign of Ivan the Terrible, and in the reign of Peter the Great; and that there was just the same gnawing hunger and poverty, just the same dilapidated thatched roofs, just the same ignorance, the same boredom with life, the same desert around, the same darkness within, the same sense of oppression—that all these terrors were and are and will be, and that, though a thousand years roll by, life can never be any better.

Could anything be more pitiful—and more hopeless! And yet it was not the pity of it that Chékhov was picturing. It was the fatalism, the mockery, the uselessness of struggle, the satire of even complaining, that seemed to him to demand a voice. All contemporary life was gray. To him it was a silly thing to seek to idealize it. The only course was to view things as they are—the venom, the scurrility, the disenchantment, the heart-break, the hunger, the chill of soul and body, were real; then why delude self by renaming them, for alter them one could not! Why struggle when inertia accomplished just as much—that is to say, nothing! Why dream when the visions brought one no nearer light than did waking! Again and again his characters set out cheered by hopes and warmed by illusions, but one by one they return, hardened, dulled, disenchanted. But even this experience is not worth fretting about. The gaunt, wild-eyed men, the flat, empty-breasted women, are products of the Russian system, so why should they aspire to the unattainable? Let them be indifferent, for that is the surest anæsthetic.

But in all this one feels the terrible arraignment of the god-of-things-as-they-are, and no blame for the individual. Chékhov doubtless pitied men, but he excoriated Russian society. If he laughed at misery, it was that misery might not crush out the very life. If he preached indiffer-

entism, it was that the Juggernaut of society should not pulverize those over whom its wheels must surely pass.

In the banalities of life and its useless beatings against the bars Chékhov was quick to see effective literary material. If life was colorless, it still called for a master of grays and neutral tints to lay them effectively upon the canvas—and such a painter was Chékhov. Dealing with trivial things, and dealing with them in a manner sometimes bitterly laughing, again at times with fierce cynicism, but sometimes too with the gentle sadness of an accepted despair, the man became a sincere realist—an accurate delineator of “the unprofitable life.” He could picture, in *The Steppe*, that most monotonous of all landscapes with an idealized charm of variety which enchanted the reader, but his obligation to human nature was to paint it remorselessly with truth. Unhappily, his pathological mind saw little but the contemptible, the trivial, the stupid, and the mean. The nobler elements he did not omit, but he never asserted or even intimated their final triumph. He could strip the shreds of pretension and illusion from the soul of man as ruthlessly as a fiend would denude the body of his helpless victim. For old age to be despicable, or for youth to be polluted, was all the justification needed to picture them just so upon his canvas.

✓ “Ward No. 6”—a pitiless tragedy disclosing the ultimate break-down of all that is noble in body, mind, and spirit—is probably Chékhov’s greatest story. It takes its title from the lunatic asylum in a “squalid, remote, and stagnant country town. . . . A pandemonium of brutality, corruption, and neglect.” The patients suffer unspeakable abuses from the attendants, chiefly from the porter, Nikita, whose brutal fists beat all protesting patients into insensibility.

The old doctor used to sell the hospital stores to enrich himself, but Ragin, the new physician, was a man of honesty, heart, and ability. The abuses of the place he detests, and the sufferings of the inmates make his gorge rise and his heart burn. But, as with most of Chékhov’s good men, his will is inert, and at last he condones and falls into indifference toward the horrors of the place.

One day he discovers an unusual intelligence in Gromof, one of the long-time inmates, and comes to take a great interest in him. For hours at a time he gives up his occupations and listens to Gromof’s wisdom. The nurses, at this, think Ragin insane, and by a trick shut him up in the very room whose terrible condition at first so inspired him with horror. “I am glad! You drank other men’s blood; now they will drink yours!” screams Gromof in a rage of madness.

After a short confinement, Ragin joins the other inmates in a revolt, but Nikita uses his huge fists, and the next day Ragin is dead.

I recite this at some length because no shorter story could so fully present the hopeless philosophy of its author.

Chékhov made several excursions into the drama, but he was not given to plot, and all his effects were subtle and intellectual, so that it requires a company of brilliant actors to present his plays. The most important are *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Seagull*, *The Bear*, and *The Gray Stocking*.

In the short-story our author excelled, but here too his tendency was not toward plot. The objectivist in fiction tends toward the impressionistic sketch, and Chékhov was a master in sensing a mood outside of himself and relentlessly reproducing the impression.

Of "Darling" Tolstoi has said that the author intended to laugh at Darling, sneer at her self-sacrifice; but in spite of his plan he had created a character of beauty.

Olenka Plemyannikof, the daughter of a retired "college assessor," cannot live unless she is loving some one. She loves her father, her mother, her relatives, and when at school she had fallen in love with the French-master. Observing her rosy cheeks and kind expression, and the naïve smile playing on her face when she is pleased, every one feels attracted to her, and frequently women stop in the midst of a conversation and grasp her hand, exclaiming, "You darling!"

Koukin, manager and proprietor of the Tivoli pleasure gardens, occupies the wing in the Plemyannikofs' house. Troubles connected with rainy evenings, when his audiences were small, touch Olenka's kind heart, and she stays awake at night until he comes home, so that she may smile encouragement through her window. At length they marry, and their life runs smoothly, Olenka helping her husband in many ways. Her radiant face alone draws people, and she tells them that the theatre is the greatest thing in the world. "What a wonderful man you are!" she says adoringly to her husband. But when on a business trip to Moscow Koukin dies; and Olenka feels then that the end of the world has come for her.

Three months after, returning from church one day, she meets Vassili Andreyich Pastovalof, manager of a timber merchant's yard, and he tells her that she should bear submissively the fate which God willed. His grave voice stays in her memory—and shortly afterward they are married. They live happily, and now it seems to Olenka that she has been in the timber trade all her life. She echoes her husband's opinions—whatever he thinks, she thinks, wherever he wants to go, or not to go, she does the same. When her friends suggest recreation, her reply is, "I and Vassichka have no time to frequent theatres. We are business people, with no time for trifles. Besides, what good is there in theatres?"

Thus they live harmoniously for six years. But one cold morning, after drinking some hot tea, Pastovalof steps into the yard without his hat and catches a chill. Four months later Olenka is again a widow.

Not till six months after her husband's death does she remove her weeds and open the house shutters, so great is her grief. Then it is rumored that she takes tea with a regimental veterinary surgeon, Smirnin, who occupies one of the wings of her house. He is separated from his wife, but contributes to his son's support. Olenka becomes absorbed in this new interest, for she cannot live without lavishing her affection on some one. Their happiness is interrupted by Smirnin's being called away with his regiment; and now the woman is once more desolate.

The years pass and Olenka is entirely without fixed opinions, has nothing to speak about, so she grows old-looking and dormant. She has nothing to reflect. But one night Smirnin comes back. He has retired from the army, is reunited with his wife, and wants to settle down in the town. Olenka offers him her house free to live in, saying that the wing is quite enough for her; so the man and the woman and their child come to Olenka's house. And in the little boy she finds an object to love, even taking him into her own rooms, where they play and study together. Then Olenka develops opinions on education, and grows young again.

In his earlier days Chékov espoused satirical comedy. In "A Work of Art—The Story of a Gift" we have one of these typical nonsense stories.

A young man, Alexander Smirnoff, enters the office of Dr. Koshelkoff, his physician, and, with many expressions of profoundest gratitude, presents him with an exquisite bronze candelabrum. The youth is the only son of his mother, and out of the stock left by his father—for they are carrying on his business in antiques—they have reserved this treasure, which they now give to the physician because his care had saved the young man's life. Smirnoff's one regret is that he does not possess the mate, so as to give the doctor the pair.

The medical man is embarrassed. The piece is lovely, but—improper. The two dancing female figures are quite too unconventional for the doctor's office—he has a wife, a family, a mother-in-law, and lady patients! No, he cannot accept the gift. But after many hurt protests on the part of the donor, the physician keeps it anyhow.

No sooner is the young man gone than the doctor remembers a gay bachelor lawyer to whom he owes many favors, and hurries off to give him the beautiful but immodest bronze. The lawyer cannot express his admiration—and regret. His patrons would be horrified, it would injure his reputation. No, he cannot keep it.

The physician in turn is deeply wounded, so to save his friend's feelings the lawyer consents to keep it; and the doctor hurries off chuckling in glee.

Immediately the lawyer presents the statuette to an actor. The theatrical star is delighted, and soon his room is besieged by men who

want to see the savory work of art. But presently the actor sees that he cannot receive lady visitors in the presence of such a statuette.

"Sell it," suggests a friend, and at once he despatches the offending candelabrum to Madame Smirnoff, the old woman who deals in antiques.

Two days later Dr. Koshelkoff sat peacefully in his study—when suddenly the door of his room flew open, and Alexander Smirnoff burst upon his sight. His face beamed with joy, he fairly shone, and his whole body breathed inexpressible content.

In his hands he held an object wrapped in a newspaper.

"Doctor," he began breathlessly, "imagine my joy! What good fortune! Luckily for you, my mother has succeeded in obtaining a companion piece to your candelabrum. You now have the pair complete. Mother is so happy. I am her only son, you know. You saved my life."

Trembling with joy and with excess of gratitude, young Smirnoff placed the candelabrum before the doctor. The physician opened his mouth, attempted to say something, but the power of speech failed him—and he said nothing.

Again in a different vein is "The Safety Match."

Lieutenant Klausoff, a retired officer of the Horse Guards, who has separated from his wife, Olga, on account of his own dissipations and her shrewish temper, is reported as missing by Psyekoff, the lieutenant's agent. The examining magistrate, Chubikoff, and Dukovski, his ambitious assistant, learn that Klausoff has not been seen for a week, and when they break open his room all signs suggest a murder. Young Dukovski, who is a disciple of induction as a means of arriving at the facts of crime, discovers in the room one boot, a burned safety match, marks of teeth on a pillow, signs of struggle about the bed, an unfastened window, footprints beneath it, the mark of a knee on the window-sill, and some threads of blue cloth caught in a burdock bush near-by. All these lead him to conclude that the murderers, one of whom wore blue trousers, climbed in the window, sprang upon Klausoff while he was taking off his boots, smothered him with a pillow, and dragged him away. The second boot is at length found near-by, and the investigators now seek for the criminals. The shrewd Dukovski, who is continually laughed at by his superior Chubikoff, infers that two of the murderers are the valet and Psyekoff, the agent, because it developed that first the valet and then Psyekoff had loved the same woman, whom their master had finally won. Besides, Psyekoff wears blue trousers. Jealousy must have been the cause, for the victim's watch and money still lay upon his table. When confronted with these facts and a reconstruction of the deed, neither can make effective denial.

A third conspirator is found in the victim's sister, who is a religious enthusiast and intensely indignant that her rakish brother should be living apart from his wife, Olga.

At last Dukovski succeeds in tracing the purchase of a box of safety matches to Olga, whereupon he concludes that she also is implicated. He and Chubikoff confront her with the circumstantial evidences which indicate that she and her accomplices have dragged off the body of her husband. Astounded, she breaks down, and leads the officers into an adjoining room, where the body of Klausoff is lying on a couch—asleep! The wife, who still loves her tipsy lord, has dragged him away and holds him in durance so that she may live with him whether he will or not.

Master of an alert, firm style, and skilled not only in penetration but in effective expression, Chékhov has a place in Russian literature which is less difficult to designate than is usual in the case of one only a few years dead. Certainly his themes are neither big nor vital enough, nor yet sufficiently human, to accord him position beside the philosophical Tolstoi, the titanic Turgenev, and the lion-hearted Dostoevski (a greater novelist than short-story writer). Rather do his workmanship, power of characterization, and subtle, sardonic humor point to a solitary niche close to the grim and morbid Andrejev. His appeal—always intellectual—to his own people is tremendous, and in Germany his vogue is still important. It seems safe to say that among Russian fictionists he stands in the first rank of the second company.

To represent Chékhov's work, I have chosen "In Exile," which follows complete in a new translation, because while it exhibits all his mature characteristics it is less unpleasant on the one hand and on the other less trivial than many of his other short-stories. But of its qualities the reader may now judge.

IN EXILE

OLD Simon, nicknamed Wiseacre, and a young Tartar, whom no one knew by name, sat on the river-bank before a bonfire. The other three ferrymen were in the hut. Simon, a man of sixty, gaunt and toothless, but broad of shoulder and still hale in appearance, was drunk. He had meant to go to sleep long ago, but there was a flask in his pocket, and he feared that his comrades in the hut might ask him to pass it around. The Tartar felt ill and tired; shivering in his rags, he was recounting what a comfortable home he had had in his native province, and what a handsome, clever wife he had left there. He was hardly more than twenty-five years old, but now, before the blaze of the bonfire, his pale, melancholy face seemed to be that of a mere lad.

"It's no paradise here, to be sure," Wiseacre agreed with him.

"You can see for yourself: water, bare banks, and everywhere clay—nothing more. . . . Holy Week has passed, there's ice on the river, and only this morning it snowed."

"It's miserable! Miserable!" said the Tartar, as he glanced round him in terror.

Some ten paces away flowed the dark, cold river. It seemed to grumble as it noised its way past the corroded clay bank and rapidly bore itself onward somewhere towards the distant sea. At the very edge of the bank there rose the dark, massive form of a barge, the kind called *Karbass* by the ferrymen. Looking in the distance towards the opposite bank, one could see numerous fires, flaring and retreating, and resembling so many leaping serpents. It was the burning of last year's grass. And beyond the fires, again darkness. The sound of floating ice beating against the barge could be heard. It was damp, cold. . . .

The Tartar glanced up towards the sky. There were just as many stars here as at home, and the same surrounding darkness; yet there was something lacking. Somehow, at home, in the Simbirsk province, there were no such stars and no such sky.

"It's miserable! Miserable!" he repeated.

"You'll get used to it!" said Wisacre, and laughed. "You are still in your teens, and silly. Your mother's milk has n't as yet dried upon your lips. Of course it seems to your foolish mind that there is no one more miserable than you; but the time will come when you yourself will say, 'May God grant every one such a life!' Now look at me. In another week the water will be normal again; I shall take charge of the ferry-boat; you will go jaunting through Siberia, while I shall remain here and resume making my way from bank to bank. I've been doing it twenty-two years, night and day. The pike and the salmon under the water; I above it. And thank God for that! I want nothing. May God grant every one such a life."

The Tartar threw more brushwood into the fire, and, moving closer to it, said:

"I have an ailing father. When he dies, my mother and my wife will join me here. They have promised."

"What do you want with a mother and a wife?" asked Wisacre. "You'll repent it, brother. It's the devil that's putting you up to it, curse his soul! Don't listen to him, the accursed one! Don't give in to him. When he gets your mind on women, just spite him; tell him, 'I don't want them!' When he talks freedom to you, get stubborn; tell him, 'I don't want it! I want nothing—neither father, nor mother, nor wife, nor freedom, nor house, nor anything! I want nothing, confound their souls!'"

Wisacre took another gulp from his flask and continued:

"Now look at me, brother. I am not a simple *moujik*, but a sex-

ton's son, in fact; and when I lived in freedom in Kursk I wore a frock-coat; but now I've gotten so that I could sleep naked on the ground and eat grass. And God grant every one such a life! I want nothing, and I fear no one. I'm on good terms with myself, and I cannot imagine any one richer and freer than I. When I was banished from Russia, I insisted from the very first day: 'I want nothing!' The devil he talks to me of wife, and of home, and of freedom; and I back at him: 'I want nothing!' I insisted on mine, and, as you see, I live well, and do not complain. Give way to the devil but an inch, and you are lost. There's no deliverance, you sink into the bog over your very head, and there's no getting out. Not alone your brother, the stupid *moujik*; but nobles and educated men are lost. Some fifteen years ago they sent here one of that gentry. He did n't share some property with his brothers, tampered somehow with a will. They say he comes from the dukes or the barons—or perhaps he is only an official—how should one know? Well, this gentleman arrived here, and the first thing he did was to buy himself a house and some land. 'I intend,' he said, 'to live by the sweat of my brow, because,' he said, 'I am no longer a gentleman, but a convict.' 'Well,' said I to myself, 'may God help him, he means well!' He was at that time a fussy, bustling young man; did his own mowing and now and then caught fish, and rode sixty versts a day on horseback. That was his one misfortune. From the very first year he made trips to Girino, to the post-office there. Times were and he would be on my ferry-boat sighing: 'Ah, Simon, it's rather a long time since they have sent me money from home!' 'There's no need,' I'd go on telling him, 'of money, Vassili Sergeyich. What good is it? Throw it aside,' I argued with him. 'All that's gone by; forget it as if it never were; as if you had only dreamt it; and begin life anew. Don't listen,' I said to him, 'to the devil. It'll lead to no good; it'll only draw a noose around your neck. Now it's money you want, and later it'll be another thing—there's no end to it. If it's happiness you seek, first of all desire nothing. Yes. . . . If,' I said to him, 'Fate has treated you and me badly, there's no begging charity of her, no falling at her feet; rather should one treat her with scorn and laugh at her—then she too will laugh.' So I spoke to him. . . . Two years later I ferried him over to this side—and he all overjoyed and laughing. 'I am going,' he said, 'to Girino to meet my wife. She has taken pity on me,' he said, 'and is coming out here. She's a fine woman, good-hearted.' He almost choked from happiness. The next day he brought his wife. She was young, handsome, in a pretty hat; and in her arms a girl baby; and all sorts of baggage with her. As to Vassili Sergeyich, he fussed around her, could n't stop feasting his eyes on her or stop raving about her. 'Yes, brother Simon, even in Siberia people live.' 'All right,' I said to myself. 'Don't be

too sure of that.' And from that time on, mark it, he began to make weekly visits to Girino: to see if any money had come from Russia. He needed no end of money. 'She,' he said, 'is sacrificing her youth and beauty in Siberia for my sake, and is sharing with me my bitter lot; and therefore,' he said, 'I should give her every possible pleasure.'

. . . To make it cheerful for her, he started up an acquaintance with the officials and with all sorts of trashy people. Well, all this company had to be furnished food and drink; then a piano had to be had, and a shaggy little dog for the sofa—the deuce take it! . . . In a word, luxury, extravagance! She did not live long with him. How could she? Here she saw only mud, water, cold, no vegetables or fruits, and all around her uneducated people, full of drink, and without manners—and she a spoiled lady from St. Petersburg. . . . Naturally, she grew sick of it. And the husband too was no longer what he had been, but a convict.

"It was one Assumption Eve, three years later, that I remember some one shouting from the opposite bank. I crossed over, and whom should I see but the lady herself all wrapped up—and with her a young gentleman, one of the officials. A *troika*! . . . I ferried them over to this side; the *troika* was ready; ah, but you should have seen them fly! Hardly the wink of an eye and there was not a trace of them.

"And in the morning Vassili Sergeyich came running here. 'Simon, has my wife passed this way with a gentleman in spectacles?' 'Yes, she did pass this way,' I said to him; 'go and seek the wind in the fields!' He gave chase to them, but returned in five days. When I ferried him across to the other side, he threw himself down in the bottom of the boat, and began to beat his head against the planks and to whine. 'What else had you to expect?' I said to him. I laughed and reminded him: 'Even in Siberia people live!' But he only beat his head the harder. . . . Then he began to hanker after freedom. He heard his wife was in Russia, and of course he wanted to go there and to take her away from her lover. Almost every day he would go to the post-office or to the government offices. He presented petition after petition, begging for pardon and for permission to return home. He told me he had spent a couple of hundred roubles on telegrams alone. He sold his land, while he mortgaged his house to Jews. He grew gray and bent; his face yellow—a consumptive, in fact. Speaking to you, he would always go: *khe-khe-khe* . . . and his eyes full of tears. For eight years he kept on handing in those petitions, but after that he had come to life and grown jolly again. You see, he had thought of another luxury. His daughter had grown up. And he feasted his eyes on her and did n't get enough of it. She really was an attractive girl—pretty, black-browed, and rather spirited in manner. Every Sunday he'd take her with him to Girino to church. They'd stand hand

in hand on the ferry, and he not taking his eyes from her. 'Yes, Simon,' he would say, 'even in Siberia people live. Even in Siberia there is happiness. Just look what a daughter I've got! You can't find another like her if you seek a thousand miles around!' The girl, as I said, was really a beauty. . . . But I thought to myself: 'Just wait. . . . She's a young girl; the blood tingles, and one wants to live, and what sort of life is to be had here?' And, comrade, to make the story short, she really began to ail. . . . She got to coughing, and coughing, to pining away; and now she is very sick, can hardly stand on her legs. Consumption! There's your Siberian happiness for you—the deuce take it!—that's how even in Siberia people live. . . . Now he's begun to chase after doctors, and to bring them back home with him. Let him but hear there's a doctor or a healer within two hundred or three hundred versts, and off he goes after him. It's terrible to think how much money he has spent on doctors. I'd rather drink up the money. . . . She'll die, any way. She'll die, there's no gainsaying that, and then he'll be lost altogether. He'll hang himself from sorrow, or he'll escape to Russia—and then you know what will happen. He'll be caught, sentenced to hard labor; he'll taste the knout. . . ."

"That is well," murmured the Tartar, trembling with cold.

"What is well?" asked Wiseacre.

"He's had his wife, his daughter. . . . You say you want nothing. To have nothing is bad! His wife lived with him three years—God was good to him. To have nothing is bad, but three years is good. Don't you understand?"

Trembling with cold, stammering out with difficulty the few Russian words he knew, the Tartar expressed the hope that God might preserve him from dying in a strange land and being buried in a cold, blighted earth; if his wife should come only for a single day, for a single hour, he would consent, for the sake of this brief happiness, to undergo the worst tortures and thank God for them. Better one day of happiness than nothing!

Again he spoke of the handsome and clever wife he had left at home; then, putting his hands to his head, he began to cry and to assure Simon that he was innocent and was undergoing punishment for no just cause. His two brothers and an uncle had stolen some horses from a *moujik* and had beaten the old man half to death; but society dealt with him unjustly, and sent the three brothers to Siberia, while the uncle, a rich man, remained at home.

"You'll get used to it," said Simon.

The Tartar did not reply, but fixed a tearful gaze upon the fire. His face expressed doubt and alarm, as if he still did not understand why he was here in this darkness and cold, among strangers, and not at home. Wiseacre lay beside the fire, chuckled at something, and hummed.

"What sort of happiness is there for her with her father?" he said after a pause. "He loves her, and is comforted in her, it is true; but he's no fool; he's a stern, harsh old man—and young girls don't want sternness. . . . They want caresses and ha-ha-ha! and hi-ho-ho!—and perfume and pomade. Yes. . . . *Ekh*, this business!" sighed Simon, and lifted himself awkwardly. "The vodka's all gone; that means it's time to go bed. Well, I'm going, brother. . . ."

Left alone, the Tartar added more brushwood to the fire, lay down facing it, and began to think of his native village and of his wife; if she were to come, even if only for a month, for a day—then let her go back if she wanted to! Better a month, even a day, than nothing! But if his wife were to keep her promise and come, how should he feed her? Where could she live?

"If there is nothing to eat, how can one live?" he asked aloud.

For working day and night at an oar he was paid but ten kopecks a day; it is true, passengers sometimes gave a gratuity for tea and for vodka, but his companions shared it among themselves, and gave the Tartar nothing, only laughing at him. And poverty made him feel hungry, cold, and frightened. Now, since his body ached and trembled, he wished to go into the hut and to bed, but he knew that there was nothing there to cover oneself with, and that it was colder than on the bank; here too there was nothing to cover oneself with, but one could at least keep up the fire. . . .

In another week, when the water should have subsided, and the regular ferryboat resumed its course, the services of the ferrymen, with the exception of Simon's, would be dispensed with; then the Tartar must start tramping from village to village and beg for alms and work. His wife was but seventeen years old; pretty, petted, and shy—must she too traverse villages and beg for bread? No, the mere thought of it was terrible.

Dawn was already breaking. The barge and the willows stood out clearly; the surging foam too was visible. Glancing behind him, the Tartar could see the clayey slope; the small, brown-thatched hut was at its base, and the huts of the village above. The cocks already crowed in the village.

The red clayey slope, the barge, the river, the strange, evil-minded people, hunger, cold, disease—they all seemed not to exist at all. It was all a dream, thought the Tartar. He imagined that he was asleep and could hear himself snoring. . . . Of course he was at home, in the Simbirsk province, and all he needed to do to have his wife appear was to call her by name; and in the next room was his mother. . . . What terrible things dreams are! Of what use are they? The Tartar smiled and opened his eyes. What river was this? The Volga?

It began to snow.

"Ho, there!" came a shout from the other side. "The boat!"

The Tartar sprang up and went to wake his companions. Pulling on their torn sheepskin coats while on the way to the boat, filling the air with oaths from their hoarse throats, and shivering with cold, the ferrymen made their appearance. After their sleep, the river, with its cold, penetrating wind, seemed to them most repellent and terrible. Leisurely they took their places in the *Karbass*.

The Tartar and three ferrymen seized the long broad-bladed oars, resembling in the dark the claws of a crab; while Simon threw himself down on his stomach across the helm. The shouting continued on the other side; two revolver shots were also heard; it was apparent that he who fired them thought the ferrymen were still asleep, or in the village tavern.

"Never mind, you'll get there!" murmured Wiseacre in a voice which conveyed his assurance that in this world there was no need of hurrying—that it was all the same in the long run.

The heavy, awkward barge parted from the bank, and made its way slowly through the willows; and only the slightly perceptible backward movement of the willows indicated that the barge was moving at all. The ferrymen, with measured slowness, swung their oars. Wiseacre lay on his stomach across the helm, and, describing a curve in the air, was thrown from one side to the other. In the dark, it seemed as if a number of men were sitting on some long-clawed antediluvian animal and were floating towards that cold, melancholy land seen sometimes only in nightmares.

The barge passed beyond the willows and was now in the open. Presently, on the other bank, could be heard the creaking and the measured dipping of the oars; while those in the boat could hear some one shouting: "Quicker! Quicker!" Another ten minutes, and the barge struck heavily against the landing.

"It keeps on snowing! It keeps on snowing!" grumbled Simon, wiping the snow from his face. "God knows where it all comes from!"

On the bank stood a rather thin, low-statured old man, dressed in a short foxskin coat and a white lambskin cap. He stood at some distance from the horses and did not move; his face had a morose, concentrated expression, as if he were making an effort to recall something and were angry at his disobedient memory. When Simon, smiling, approached him, and took off his cap, the man said:

"I am in great haste to go to Anastasevka. My daughter is worse again, and there, I am told, a new doctor has come."

The coach was wheeled on board the barge, which started to cross back. The man, whom Simon called Vassili Sergeyich, stood all the time immovable, tightly compressing his thick lips, and looking with a fixed gaze into the distance; when the driver asked permission to smoke

in his presence, he did not reply, as if he had not heard. Simon lay on the bottom of the boat on his stomach, looked at him derisively, and said:

"Even in Siberia people live. L-live!"

The face of Wiseacre wore a triumphant expression, as if he had demonstrated something and rejoiced that what he had prophesied had come true. The unhappy, helpless look of the man in the foxskin coat apparently afforded him considerable gratification.

"Rather muddy now for travelling, Vassili Sergeyich," said he, while the horses were being harnessed. "It would n't be a bad idea to postpone your trip for a week or two, till it gets a bit more dry. Perhaps it were better you did n't go at all. . . . If there were only some sense in your going! Well, you yourself know that people travel eternally, day and night, and get nowhere. What do you say?"

Vassili Sergeyich gave the ferrymen for vodka, sat himself in the coach, and was off.

"There! After the doctor again!" said Simon, trembling from cold. . . . "Yes, seek a real doctor, catch the wind in the field, seize the devil by the tail, confound your soul! What queer people there are! And forgive me, oh, Lord, a sinner!"

The Tartar walked up to Wiseacre, and looked at him with hatred and repulsion. He trembled, and as he spoke he mingled with his broken Russian several Tartar words:

"He is good . . . good, but you are bad! You are bad! He is a good soul, a noble soul, but you are a beast, you are bad! He is living, but you are dead. . . . God created men that they might live, that they might have joys and sorrows; but you want nothing—which means that you are dead, you're a stone, you're earth! A stone wants nothing—and you want nothing! . . . You're a stone—and God does not love you, but him He loves!"

All laughed; the Tartar frowned disgustedly, waved his hand, and, wrapping his rags around him, walked up to the fire. Simon and the ferrymen went towards the hut.

"It's cold!" hoarsely murmured one ferryman, stretching himself on the straw, with which the entire floor was covered.

"Yes, it is n't warm!" agreed another. "A galley-slave's life!"

All lay down. The door flew open before the wind, and the snow drifted into the hut. No one wanted to get up and close the door; they all felt cold and lazy.

"Well, things suit me!" said Simon drowsily. "God grant every one such a life!"

"You, as every one knows, are a born galley-slave. Even the devil won't take you!"

From the outside came sounds resembling the whining of a dog.

"What's that? Who's there?"

"That's the Tartar crying!"

"Well! . . . What a character!"

"He'll get used to it!" said Simon, and soon was asleep.

Soon the others were also asleep. But the door remained unshut.

OLD RHYTHM AND RHYME

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

THEY tell me new methods now govern the Muses,
 The modes of expression have changed with the times;
 That low is the rank of the poet who uses
 The old-fashioned verse with intentional rhymes.
 And quite out of date, too, is rhythmical metre;
 The critics declare it an insult to art.
 But oh! the sweet swing of it, oh! the clear ring of it,
 Oh! the great pulse of it, right from the heart,
 Art or no art.

I sat by the side of that old poet, Ocean,
 And counted the billows that broke on the rocks;
 The tide lilted in with a rhythmical motion;
 The sea-gulls dipped downward in time-keeping flocks.
 I watched while a giant wave gathered its forces,
 And then on the gray granite precipice burst;
 And I knew as I counted, while other waves mounted,
 I knew the tenth billow would rhyme with the first.

Below in the village a church-bell was chiming,
 And back in the woodland a little bird sang;
 And, doubt it who will, yet those two sounds were rhyming,
 As out o'er the hill-tops they echoed and rang.

The Winds and the Trees fell to talking together;
 And nothing they said was didactic or terse;
 But everything spoken was told in unbroken
 And beautiful rhyming and rhythmical verse.

So rhythm I hail it, though critics assail it,
 And hold melting rhymes as an insult to art,
 For oh! the sweet swing of it, oh! the dear ring of it,
 Oh! the strong pulse of it, right from the heart,
 Art or no art.

THE SECURITIES OF PUBLIC SERVICE CORPORATIONS

By Edward Sherward Meade, Ph.D.

THE public service corporation is so called because it supplies a service or a commodity to the community. As an aid to the performance of this public service, it is allowed to occupy the public streets and other property with pipes, wires, or track, under a grant of authority from the municipality, known as the franchise. Examples of public service corporations are street railway companies, often combined with interurbans, gas, water, and lighting companies. Steam railroads and water-power companies are sometimes included in this classification.

The securities of public service corporations have come to be recognized in recent years as presenting most desirable opportunities to the investor. In the first place, the corporations which they represent operate in industries which are exceedingly profitable, and whose profits are rapidly increasing. Furthermore, owing to the long-standing prejudice of the largest investors against these securities—a prejudice only recently overcome—public service securities have been purchased and can still be purchased at prices which yield between five and six per cent., the return sometimes reaching the latter figure.

It is important that we should understand why the public service industries are so exceptionally prosperous. The fact must be admitted. In Philadelphia, for example, the underlying companies of the street railway system pay extraordinary dividends. The Western Pennsylvania Passenger Railway, for example, pays 20 per cent.; the Union Passenger Railway, 19 per cent.; the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Passenger Railway, 24 per cent.; and the Frankford and Southwark, 34 per cent. These are the original companies, and while an enormous investment has been made in their property by the various companies which have in turn succeeded to the control of the property of these underlying companies, yet the large dividends earned give a good idea of the profits of street-railway operation in a large city. The same thing may be said of gas, water, and electric light and power companies. In all large cities these enterprises are exceedingly profitable.

You will observe that this statement is made to refer to large cities, because it is only in the large city that the operation of the law of increasing returns in public service industry has reached its full development. In small cities and towns public service companies are not exceptionally prosperous. The operation of the law of increasing returns may be illustrated from the street-railway industry. Street-railway operation involves the maintenance of regular and frequent schedules for the service of the public. It costs but little more to operate a full car than a car half full or empty. Up to the capacity of the tracks in the congested districts, and up to the capacity of the power-house; moreover, additional cars may be added to accommodate the increase of traffic, with a comparatively small increase in the expense. The operating expenses of every business include certain items which are comparatively fixed, and certain other items which increase and diminish with the volume of business. A street railway corporation, for example, makes a certain investment in tracks, overhead work, power-houses, car barns, equipment, and cars. Out of the revenues from the operation of this property, it must earn enough to pay interest on its bonds, to keep its plant in repair, and to provide for its replacement when it is worn-out. It must also buy fuel and other supplies, and employ a large number of men in operating its power-house and in keeping its plant in repair. It has an expensive executive and legal staff, and finally it employs, if located in a large city, several thousand motormen and conductors. Out of every five cents which the passenger pays, provision must be made for all of these charges—so much for interest, for depreciation, for maintenance, and for operation of the cars.

Now, it is evident that the larger the number of people that can be transported by this plant within a given time, the smaller will be the share of these total expenses which must be borne by each passenger, and the larger will be the amount out of the five-cent fare which will remain to the company as its profit. Up to the capacity of its plant, in other words, each additional thousand passengers transported means a division of the total operating expenses among a larger number of riders, and an increase in the profit which the company takes out of each nickel which the passengers pay. When the capacity of the plant has been reached, and it becomes necessary to supplement surface street-railway lines costing \$60,000 per mile with elevated lines costing \$500,000 per mile or tunnels costing \$2,000,000 per mile, then the profits are by no means so great, because the fixed charges have been enormously increased. As soon as this replacement has been made, however, and the traffic, in response to the improved facilities, begins to increase, the law of increasing returns again comes into operation, and up to the capacity of the new and enlarged plant, each additional thousand passengers means an increase in the margin of profit in each passenger's fare.

The same law controls the expenses and profits of gas, water, and lighting companies. As the population which they serve increases and the volume of their business grows, it has been found by experience that they can supply this increased demand for long periods without materially increasing their plant and with comparatively slight increases in operating expenses.

Another feature of the demand for the commodities or services furnished by public service corporations is that not only does it increase with the growth of population, but that it increases faster than the population grows. The reason for this can readily be understood in the case of street railway operation. As the population of a city grows, the land values and rentals in the down-town sections rapidly increase, and population, both because of the lower rents in the suburbs, and also because of the cheapness and convenience of transportation which the street railway furnishes, moves from the central sections to the outlying sections. This means that large numbers of people live several miles from their places of employment, to which they must go every working morning, returning at night. The larger the population grows, the more severe becomes this pressure to the outlying section, and the stronger the demand for transportation. The central portions of the city are the natural locations for the large department-stores, hotels, theatres, and street-railway terminals, and these draw in multitudes of people over the street-railway lines.

The same proportionately greater increase in demand as compared with the growth in population is seen in the gas industry. From 1890 to 1910, for example, the population of the four boroughs of New York city increased 90.6 per cent., but the consumption of gas increased 164.6 per cent., nearly double the increase in population. In this field, the increase in demand is due not only to the growth of population, but to the growing usefulness of gas in industrial work, as well as for cooking, heating, and other domestic purposes. The business of furnishing light and power and heat shows the same tendency. The investor in the securities of well managed public service corporations located in a city of at least 100,000 population can be reasonably certain that the city will grow, and that as it grows the profits of his company will increase at a more rapid rate.

Public service corporations do not, as a rule, divide their earnings with competitors. Even when the city does not give them the exclusive right to supply transportation or gas to a community,—and the policy of our law is opposed to exclusive grants of this character,—the favorable conditions under which their business is carried on give them a practical monopoly. The nature of this monopoly, as well as the advantages of an investment in a public service corporation in a large city, was clearly expressed by Mr. Justice Peckham, of the United States Supreme Court.

in delivering the opinion of the court in the case of Wilcox vs. Consolidated Gas Company of New York, as follows:

"In an investment in a gas company, such as complainants', the risk is reduced almost to a minimum. It is a corporation, which, in fact, as the court below remarks, monopolizes the gas service of the largest city in America, and is secure against competition under the circumstances in which it is placed, because it is a proposition *almost unthinkable that the city of New York would, for purposes of making competition, permit the streets of the city to be again torn up, in order to allow the mains of another company to be laid all through them to supply gas which the present company can adequately supply.** And, so far as it is given us to look into the future, it seems as certain as anything of such a nature can be that the demand for gas will increase, and, at the reduced price, increase to a considerable extent. An interest in such a business is as near a safe and secure investment as can be imagined with regard to any private manufacturing business. . . ."

In the absence of legal restriction, a company possessing a monopoly of a necessary of life is limited in its charges only by what the traffic will bear. If the price of gas, for example, is too high, the consumption will fall off, and the expense of operation, reversing the process which was explained illustrating the law of diminishing returns, will be increased. Interest, taxes, maintenance, depreciation, executive expenses, advertising, etc., will be spread over a smaller amount of production, and the cost of each thousand feet produced will be correspondingly increased. It is to the interest of a monopoly to lower the price of its product so far as this lowering of the price will increase consumption and increase profits. Below this point it is not to the interest of the monopoly to go. If, for example, a price of \$1.00 per thousand feet will equal \$6,000,000, while a price of eighty cents will yield a profit of only \$5,500,000, because the consumption will not increase to correspond with the reduction in the price, the monopoly, unless constrained by law, will not make the reduction. On the other hand, if a reduction to eighty cents will so much increase the consumption as to raise the profits from \$6,000,000 to \$7,000,000, it is to the interest of the monopoly to reduce the price. Below the price at which the largest profit will be realized, a corporation having a monopoly of any commodity or service will not willingly go.

At this point, in the case of the public service corporation, the State steps in and applies a principle of profit regulation which is as follows: A corporation operating in a public service industry supplying a necessity of life to the community is entitled to profits equal to a reasonable return on the fair value of its property which is employed in the public service. The fair value of property has been determined, as a result of a long series of judicial decisions, to be the cost of reproducing the

* The italics in this article are the author's.

property at the time the valuation is made. The "reasonable return" depends on circumstances. Again to quote from the Consolidated Gas case:

"There is no particular rate of compensation which must in all cases and in all parts of the country be regarded as sufficient for capital invested in business enterprises. Such compensation must depend greatly upon circumstances and locality; among other things, the amount of risk in the business is a most important factor, as well as the locality where the business is conducted and the rate expected and usually realized there upon investments of a somewhat similar nature with regard to the risk attending them. There may be other matters which in some cases might also be properly taken into account in determining the rate which an investor might properly expect or hope to receive, and which he would be entitled to without legislative interference. *The less risk, the less right to any unusual returns upon the investments. One who invests his money in a business of a somewhat hazardous character is very properly held to have the right to a larger return without legislative interference, than can be obtained from an investment in Government bonds or other perfectly safe security.* The man that invested in gas stock in 1823 had a right to look for and obtain, if possible, a much greater rate upon his investment than he who invested in such property in the city of New York years after the risk and danger involved had been almost entirely eliminated."

In this case the court found that, since the gas business was probably the safest of manufacturing industries, since the Consolidated Gas Company possessed a monopoly, and since its future was reasonably assured, a return of 6 per cent. would be sufficient, and that the price of eighty cents per thousand feet for gas would yield this return. In spite of the strong arguments and the mass of evidence presented against this proposition, the Supreme Court's judgment has been vindicated by the result. In part as a result of the reduction in the price and because of the rapid increase in population of the territory served, and also because of a large increase in the profits of some of its controlled companies, notably the New York Edison, the Consolidated Gas Company which in 1905, the year before the decision was rendered, earned \$5,881,192, in 1911 earned \$8,016,281.

Starting at 6 per cent. as a "reasonable return" in the safest public service corporations, we go up in the scale according to circumstances. For example, the "reasonable return" for the Great Northern and Northern Pacific railroads in a recent court decision was held to be 7 per cent. It is not to be doubted that whenever the matter comes before the court for determination, the rate which the public service corporations will be allowed to earn will be fixed according to the circumstances of the industry and of the particular company in question. A

10 per cent. return might be entirely reasonable for a street railway company in a small city, for example, while it would be exorbitant for a street railway in a metropolis.

The development of this theory that the Public Service corporation is entitled to no more than a "reasonable rate of return," while attended with serious misgiving on the part of bankers and investors when it first came into active application, is now regarded as one of the greatest safeguards which the investor in these securities can have. The public service corporation is by its nature a monopoly. If the company is properly capitalized, and the plant is properly constructed and managed, and if ordinary business judgment has been used in fitting the capacity of the plant to the demand for its product or service, the returns to the investor are certain because the law allows the charging of rates which will yield a "reasonable return" on the capital invested. Of no other department of investment is this true. The investor in mining securities, real-estate securities, industrial securities of all kinds, is not given anything by the law. He must take his chances, and he has not the advantage of a monopoly. If, as the trusts attempted to do, these enterprises unite to obtain monopolistic power, the law is invoked against them, and these illegal combinations are broken up. The public service corporation, however, is by its nature a monopoly, and the law protects it in the enlargement of its monopolistic profits up to a point of a "reasonable return," which, as has been explained, is quite sufficient to satisfy the investor.

In the next article of this series we propose to consider some of the problems presented to the banking house which is considering the purchase of an issue of public service corporation securities.

GENTIAN

BY ANNA McCLURE SHOLL

I GAVE you flowers that painted true
The color of your tender eyes.
Each year I gather gentians blue
Since you have gone. In paradise
Do you remember where they grew
And under what ethereal skies
We sought them as the summer's prize?
Ah, Love, the gentians bloom anew!
I have them, but I have not you.

A Toast to the Coward

By William Wallace Whitelock

HERE'S to the coward who will not confess
He's afraid.

Here's to the fighter who fights ne'erthe-
less,

Though dismayed.

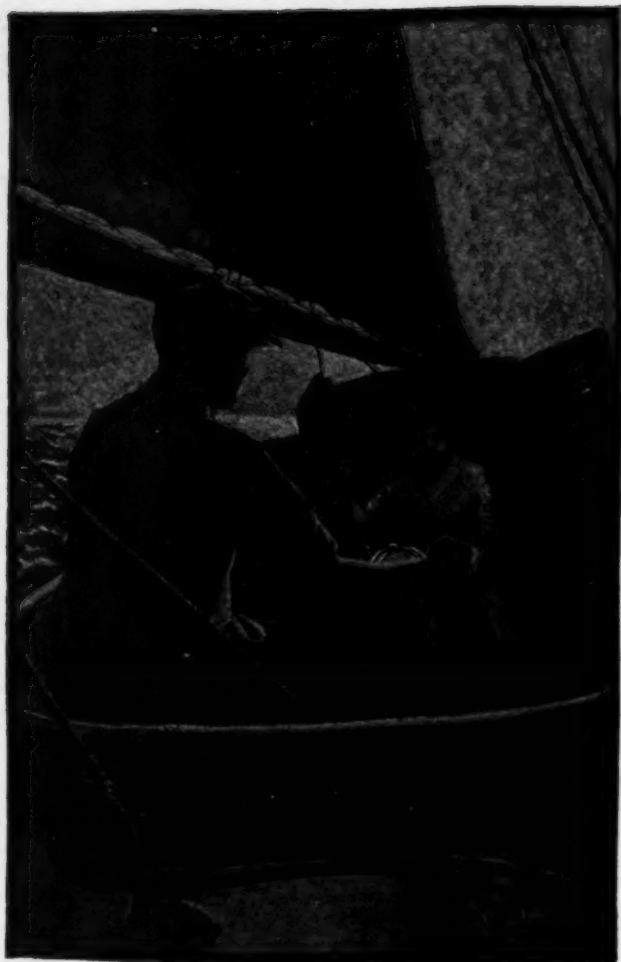
Here's to the fellow that walks to the scratch,
Facing another who's more than his match,
Frightened, yet ready the vict'ry to snatch
By God's aid.

Here's to the man with a yellow streak who
Won't retreat.

Here's to the fellow that nobody knew
Feared defeat.

Here's to the weakling who's taught himself
how,

Conquered his weakness, his fear of a row,
Here's to the coward—hats off, with a bow!—
You can't beat.



"ALL THINGS HAD BEEN SO PROSAIC, SO OBVIOUS, SO RULED BY LAW AND CONVENTION. SHE GLANCED AGAIN AT THE VIKING WHO HAD ALTERED IT ALL SO LIGHTLY AND SO EASILY AT A BLOW."

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THE SOMMER CECILIAN

THE FARRAND CECILIAN

THE CECILIAN PIANOS

— THAT ANY ONE CAN PLAY —



After the Day's Work

Q BUSINESS man all day—husband and father in the evening. How can you best achieve the transition? How throw aside “the cares that infest the day” and enter light-heartedly into the happy spirit of the home?

Q To accomplish this task of *re-creation* can any power be so effective as that of music?—
 “—music that gentlier on the spirit lies
 Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes?”

Q The Cecilian Piano—that any one can play—daily performs this modern miracle of *recreation* for thousands of tired business men. Playing it themselves—attuning their spirits to the sublime musical harmonies of the great masters, or expressing a gayer mood in some lilting modern fantasy—they attain through the Cecilian that feeling of peace and good will which at once admits them fully to the spirit of the family circle. To afford harmony and repose through self-expression—that is the mission of the Cecilian after the day's work is done.

Q On the Cecilian the veriest tyro can play the works of the master composer.

Q On the Cecilian the master performer can adequately express the utmost reaches of his genius.

Q The durable metalaction of the Cecilian Piano makes it immune to changes of temperature or climatic conditions. It is made as a unit in our own factory. The playing mechanism is, therefore, intimately adapted to the piano.

Q Why not write for our descriptive literature? Address Department 30.

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